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THE
ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY
OF MISKAWAIH



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OF
MISKAWAIH

M. ABDUL HAQ ANSARI, M.A. Ph.D. (Alig.)

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*To
My Mother*

Foreword

MISKAWAIH occupies a unique position in the history of Muslim thought. He is the first Muslim philosopher to work out an elaborate system of ethics in Islam. Before him ethical problems were either merged in theological discussions or were dealt with as a part of mysticism. Sometimes they were treated as an introduction to political philosophy and sometimes found expression in fables and legends. Miskawaih gave an independent status to ethics and made it a part and parcel of Islamic sciences. His position is that of a pioneer in this field and his influence is tracable in all subsequent writers on Ethics.

Unfortunately, no critical and thoroughly analytical work existed on Miskawaih's ethics, particularly for the English-knowing circles. It is gratifying to note that Dr. Abdul Haq Ansari, a brilliant scholar of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology, has undertaken to fulfil this need. Dr. Ansari, with his thorough grounding in Arabic and his deep insight in philosophy, was specially fitted for this arduous task. The present work, the *Ethical Philosophy of Miskawaih*, is the Ph.D. thesis of Dr. Ansari on which he was awarded Ph.D. degree in Philosophy by the Aligarh Muslim University.

In this work Dr. Ansari has given a lucid exposition of Miskawaih's point of view, analysing various trends and tracing them to their sources. He has tried to make a study of Miskawaih's ethics against the background of previous ethical thought. He has not confined his comparative study to Miskawaih's predecessors alone, but has also tried to view his position in relation to the subsequent ethical thought. In short, he has done full justice to his subject and has amply succeeded in determining and evaluating the contribution of Miskawaih to the development of Islamic ethics. Miskawaih's credit, in the words of Dr. Ansari, lies in "his effort to re-interpret Islamic ideals in terms of Greek philosophy."

In the present age of intellectual crisis, when the world is yearning for better understanding between the East and the West, when humanity needs a deeper appreciation of the ideals and aspirations underlying different cultures and religions, this effort of Dr. Ansari, I hope, will have a warm reception in the philosophical world.

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ALIGARH

28th December, 1963

Preface

ETHICAL thought in Islam originated with the early theologians. Initially, however, it was confined largely to two problems : the knowledge of the good and the right, and the problem of the basis of moral obligation. The development of the moral ideal was a task undertaken later by the *ṣūfīs* and philosophers. The early *ṣūfīs*, however, were not primarily concerned with the exposition of their ideal, they only practised it. It was left to al-Ghazālī (d. 505 A.H.) who from amongst the *ṣūfīs*, first undertook a systematic construction of the *ṣūfī* moral ideal. The philosophers, on the other hand, formulated their ideal and worked out its details.

Early Muslim philosophical thought did not clearly distinguish between ethics and politics. Its ethical discussion almost invariably served as a preface to political philosophy. Miskawaih was the first to disengage ethics from politics. He made of it an independent discipline and worked out his own system of ethics. On this basis he rightly deserves to be called the father of Muslim ethics.

The major factors that contributed to the development of the moral ideal in the early centuries of Islam were the teachings of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, Greek philosophy and the political and social conditions of the times. Hence the development of the ideal should be studied as the result of the interplay of these factors.

Although the various trends of Muslim ethical thought differed widely in their approach, they did not remain unaffected by each other. Even the dry discussions of the theologians contributed, in their own way, to the fervid enthusiasm for the pursuit of the moral ideal among the *ṣūfīs*. The resemblance between the ideal of the philosophers and that of the *ṣūfīs* was very marked. In their conception of the highest good and of its relationship with virtue, they came quite close to each other. In fact the whole development of ethical thought in Islam evinces a unity that has yet to be fully studied.

An integrated study of this development has its own importance. But its significance for understanding the ethical philosophy of any thinker, be he a *ṣūfī* or a philosopher, can hardly be overemphasised. In

this book I have endeavoured to unfold this development as far as it was necessary for the appreciation of Miskawaih's ethics.

The ethical system of Miskawaih is the most outstanding achievement of philosophical ethics in Islam. Although the metaphysical and psychological basis of his ethics is neo-Platonic, he has employed this Greek medium to present the values and ideals of his own culture and religion. His ethics is not a reproduction of Greek ideals nor a confused mess of Greek and Islamic morals. It is an effort to reinterpret Islamic ideals in terms of Greek philosophy. And it is in this effort of his that Miskawaih's contribution to ethical thought lies.

This work is an exposition of Miskawaih's ethical philosophy. It analyses his ideas and constructs them into a system, it traces the origin of his various concepts and studies the reorientation that he has given them, and underlines those ideas which mark a development upon previous ethical thought.

In this study, only those thinkers have been referred to who have influenced Miskawaih's thought. To bring home the worth and importance of Miskawaih's contribution to the ethical thought of Islam, subsequent Muslim writers have also been mentioned by way of comparison. The closest approach to the kind of ethics that Miskawaih expounded, in the history of European philosophy, is that of St. Augustine. The foundations of both these thinkers were neo-Platonic; both of them attempted to interpret the values of their own religion and culture in its terms. It is from this basic resemblance that I have tried to compare their ideas. This, I hope, would bring out the unique character of Miskawaih's ethics in full relief.

There is not much literature on Miskawaih. This book is the first serious effort in English to present his ethical philosophy. Since later works on ethics in Islam are mostly based on Miskawaih's *Tahdhīb* this exposition of his ethics will be, I hope, very helpful in understanding the ethical thought of Islam, particularly as it was developed by the philosophers.

This work was completed in October 1961 and was accepted for the Degree of Philosophy in the Aligarh Muslim University in April 1962. In the period that has elapsed since then I have come to read Abu'l-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī's *Al-Saʿūdāt wa'l-Isʿūd* (1958) and Dr. R. Walzer's article on Miskawaih's *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* (included in his *Greek into Arabic*, 1962), which were not available to me earlier. Besides, my knowledge of Muslim ethical thought prior to Miskawaih has considerably increased. If I were to write the book now I should revise some of my conclusions. But since

I visualise no substantial change I allow it to appear as it was originally written.

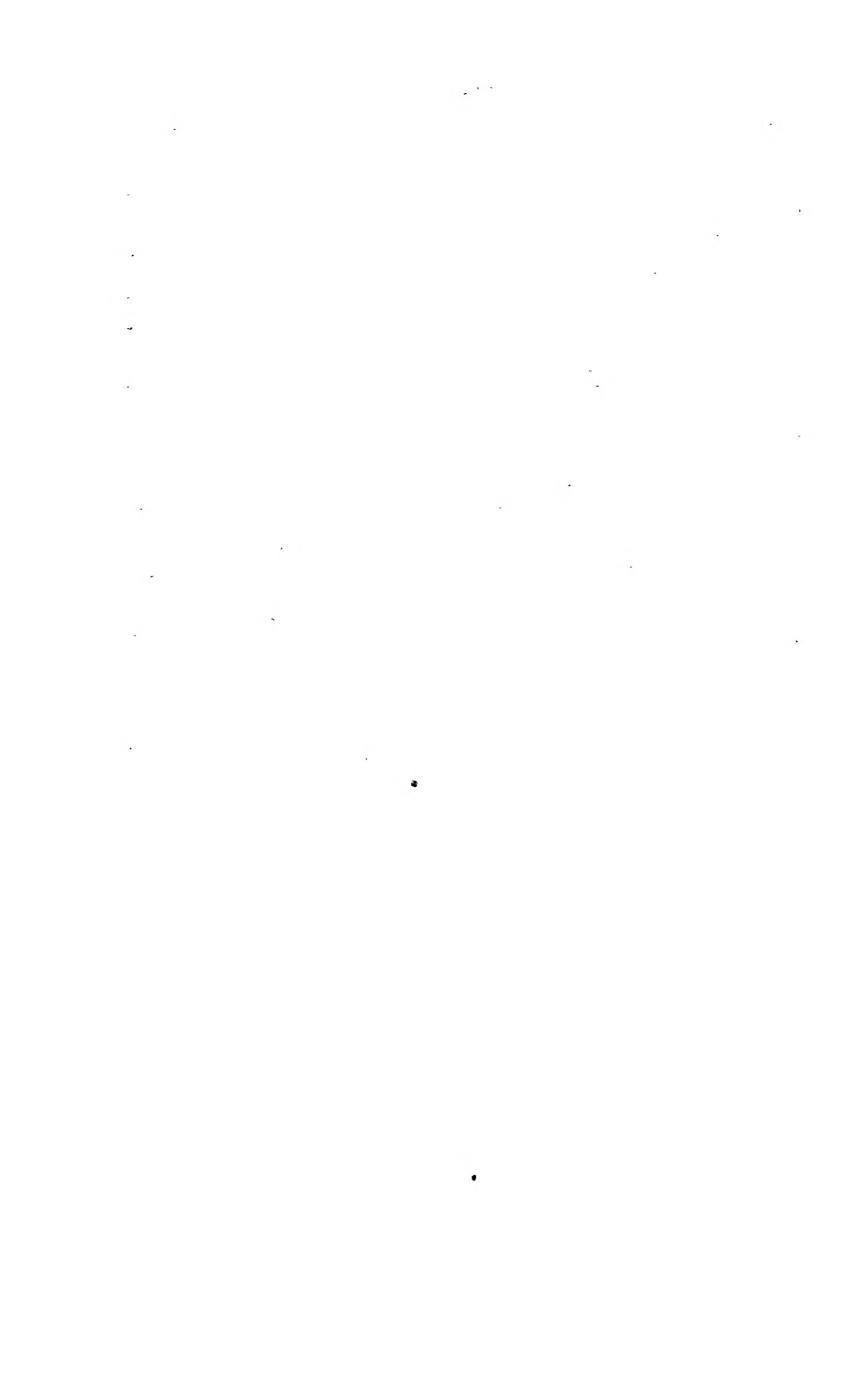
For some biographical details about Miskawaih I am indebted to Dr. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ‘Izzat’s monograph. I am extremely grateful to my revered teacher, Prof. M. ‘Umaruddīn, Head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology, for his kind and instructive guidance. His deep interest has always been a great incentive for me to complete this work. My thanks are also due to Prof. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān, former Head of the Department of Education, for giving valuable suggestions in revising the manuscript; to Mr. Zain al-‘Ābedīn, Lecturer, Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University and to Dr. Abū Naṣr Muḥammad Khālidi, Reader, Department of History, Osmania University Hyderabad, for their various suggestions and criticisms.

I am beholden to the University Grants Commission, Government of India for the fellowship that it awarded me to complete this work, and for the grant to meet the expenses of its publication.

I am also very grateful to the Aligarh Muslim University for the honour it has done me in publishing this book, and to Mr. Bantū Rām, Manager, Muslim University Press for taking keen interest in supervising its printing.

ALIGARH,
21st December, 1963.

M. ABDUL HAQ ANSARI



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CHAPTER I

Miskawaih : His Times, Life and Works

I

THE fourth century, in which Aḥmad b. Moḥammad Miskawaih (325–421 A.H./936–1030 A.D.) lived, is a period in the history of Islam characterised, on the one hand, by vigorous scientific activity, large and varied intellectual achievement and brilliant literary creation, and, on the other, by economic crisis, political disintegration, and social and moral degeneration. This was true of many of the Islamic countries in that age. But in Iraq and West Iran with which we are chiefly concerned here, both these trends were most prominent.

POLITICAL CONDITION

The Caliphate had been disintegrating for a long time. By the year 935 A.D. the process of disintegration was complete. West Iran was under the Buwayhids, Iraq under the Ḥamadānids, Egypt and Syria rendered homage to the Ikhshīdids, Africa to the Fāṭimids, Spain to the Umayyads, Transoxiana and Khurāsān to the Sāmānids, South Arabia and Baḥrain to the Kārmathians. Only Baghdād and a portion of Babylonia remained under the Caliph's rule.¹

The rulers of these principalities, however, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Caliph; so overwhelmingly sacrosanct was the idea of the Caliphate that even the Spanish Umayyads dared not assume the title of 'the Commander of the Faithful.' The Fāṭimids of Egypt were the first to violate its sanctity: in 909 A.D. they assumed the title of the Caliph. 'Abd al-Raḥmān III of Spain (912–61 A.D.) followed suit. Nevertheless, the sanctity of the Caliphate persisted; 'Aḥud al-Dawlah (949–83 A.D.) once thought of declaring himself Caliph, but refrained from it on the wise counsel of his wazīr.²

At the beginning of the century the 'Abbāsids successfully maintained their western frontiers against the attacks of the Byzantines. But with the occupation of Malatias³ in 924 A.D. Byzantine invasions became

frequent. They fully availed themselves of the opportunity provided by the irremediable weakness of the Caliphate and the unending hostilities of the states. Al-Mas'ūdī (d. 965 A.D.) laments the victories of the Romans over the Faithful, the desolation of the roads by pilgrims and the cessation of the Holy War. "Islām has been victorious hitherto," says he, "but now its stately columns are broken and its foundations are undermined. This is the plight in 942 A.D. in the Caliphate of al-Muttaqī (940—44 A.D.), the Commander of the Faithful. May God ameliorate our condition."⁴ In 972 A.D. the Romans overran Iraq, devastated the country and mercilessly plundered Nasibin. The people of Baghdād rose with the rage of despair, broke up pulpits and attacked the Caliph's residence.⁵

Since the assassination of al-Mutawakkil in 861 A.D. the Turks had continued to dominate the government and the army. The Caliph had become a puppet in their hands. They could appoint and depose, blind and kill any Caliph, plunder and pillage any group. For Baghdād the worst period was between the death of Bajkams⁶ and the entry of the Buwayhids, i. e. from 940 to 945 A.D. In the year 942 Ibn Ḥāmidī, chief of a robber band, plundered and sacked the town under the connivance of Ibn Shīrẓād,⁷ who as Secretary to the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, stood at the head of the Government. His share of the booty was 15,000 dinars a month.⁸ The citizens of Baghdād could no longer sleep in peace, houses were deserted, baths and mosques were closed. The state of insecurity became so appalling that robbers broke into the house of a Qāḍī who, while climbing the roof to effect his escape, fell down and was killed.⁹

To escape from Turkish atrocities an appeal for assistance was made to the Buwayhids. In 955 A.D. Aḥmad, one of the Buwayhid brothers, entered Baghdād and after ousting the Turks made himself all-powerful. He was rewarded by the Caliph with the title of Mu'izz al-Dawlah. Henceforth the Caliphs were puppets in the hands of the Buwayhids who dominated the scene for about a century. The history of Iraq and West Iran of the period under review is mostly the history of their domination and rule.

Mu'izz al-Dawlah (945—67 A.D.) was curt and irascible, and insulted his wazirs and officials. As a result higher offices lost their dignity and public esteem. In 952 A.D. he sentenced at Baghdād his wazir al-Muhallabī (d. 963 A.D.), a member of the Umayyad aristocracy, to 150 stripes and imprisonment. But after having subjected him to this humiliation he took him back as wazir.¹⁰ The Caliph, who was in his hands, was treated with arrogance.¹¹ Showing utter disregard

for the rights of the people, he placed his army in civic quarters at Baghdād, which imposed a heavy burden on the citizens.¹² His behaviour filled all with disgust.

His son Bakhtiyār (967—78 A.D.) had great physical strength, but in all other respects he was a thorough failure. He neither kept his word, nor carried out his threats. He only talked and did nothing. His days were spent in hunting, eating, drinking, music, joking, cock-fights, and with dogs and loose women.¹³

‘Aḡud al-Dawlah (978—83 A.D.) was the only royal personality in this house. His rule in the end extended from the Caspian Sea to Kirmān and ‘Omān. To govern this extensive empire effectively he provided for quick news service, and improved the espionage system. He restored order in the Arabian and even in the more notorious Kārmathian desert, with the result that pilgrims felt safe. He had the half ruined capital, Baghdād, renovated, mosques built, bazars laid out, canals redug, bridges repaired and waste lands reclaimed. Notwithstanding all this, Baybylonia was merely an appendage. The centre of his rule was always Persia, rather he whole-heartedly despised Baghdād.¹⁴

After ‘Aḡud al-Dawlah the Buwayhids produced no person of any real calibre. Their empire was soon dismembered and the last sources of revenue vanished. Jalāl al-Dawlah (1027—43 A.D.) had to sell his clothes in the bazar. He had no chamberlain, no servants, no porters, none even to announce the hours of prayer.¹⁵

The army of the Buwayhids consisted mainly of the Turks and the Daylamites. Both were ready to rebel whenever an opportunity offered itself. Hardly had Mu‘izz al-Dawlah established himself in Baghdād when the Daylamites mutinied over the question of pay, abusing and vituperating him unrestrainedly. The Turks, too, mutinied on several occasions, because of their dissatisfaction with their pay. ‘Aḡud al-Dawlah was the only real master of his army. He always maintained a balance between the Daylamites and the Turks, and could afford to pay his troops regularly in cash. During the three troubled years that followed, the affairs of the army grew more and more chaotic. Civil war broke out among his sons. It again became usual to entrust a general with the supreme command. The Turks were again received into favour. They gradually became so powerful that by the time of Jalāl al-Dawlah hardly any Daylamite was left in the Baghdād army, with the result that the Amir possessed no means of opposing the pretensions of the Turkish soldiery.¹⁶

Besides their usual pay, the soldiers were in the habit of demanding gratuities on the accession of the Caliphs and the Amirs. When al-Qādir (991—1031 A.D.) succeeded to the throne, the Daylamites and the Turks both mutinied, demanding accession money and not allowing the personal name of the Caliph to be mentioned in the *Khutbah* until it was paid.¹⁷ Bakhtiyār and Şamşām al-Dawlah (983—25 A.D.) had to pay to their Daylamites one third of their usual pay as accession gratuity, while Bahā' al-Dawlah (989—1012), being short of funds, paid them by melting his gold and silver plates and minting them into coins.¹⁸

ECONOMIC CONDITION

The Buwayhids were placed in an acute financial situation from the very beginning. Under the later 'Abbāsids distant provinces began gradually to evade payment of revenue. To prevent the evasion a system of tax-farming was introduced. Gradually this system spread and was enforced in some parts of Iraq itself. But it also failed, and the Caliphs were obliged to try other expedients to satisfy the army. Thus originated the system of granting military fiefs. The fiefs came to be granted not only to the officers but also to the rank and file in the army. This process reduced the state income and Baghdād came to depend more and more on irregular sources of revenue.¹⁹ Thus Ibn Shīrẓād had to depend on whole-sale extortion for raising funds for paying the soldiers and administrative personnel. The result was that many merchants fled from Baghdād and the rule of Ibn Shīrẓād became highly unpopular.²⁰

The various campaigns that Mu'izz al-Dawlah had to carry out for his Amarate, aggravated financial difficulties. Further deterioration was caused by a famine that claimed a large number of lives. The Daylamites notwithstanding the fact that they had so recently gained enormously by plunder, mutinied violently on account of delay in the payment of their dues. Mu'izz was therefore obliged to oppress the citizens and extort money. To please his officials he granted fiefs (*iqtā'*), which was in fact an alternative arrangement for revenue-farming. But it did not work, and his income tended steadily to diminish. He, therefore, resorted to other expedients. He began to sell some of the highest offices of state, such as those of Qāḍī al-Qudāt, the prefect of police and the Muḥtasib (Censor of Public Morals). In spite of using all these expedients he was on the verge of bankruptcy.²¹ All the same he decided in 961 A.D. to build a palace for himself

costing 13 million dirhams. To obtain this he fined a number of officials.²²

It was only under 'Aḡud al-Dawlah that the financial administration was satisfactorily reorganised. But though the revenues of his vast empire had increased vastly, he introduced several new taxes in order to enhance them further. He levied a tax on the sale of horses and household utensils and established monopoly in ice and flowered silk.²³ In the end he had an annual revenue of 320 million dirhams, which he wished to raise to 360 millions, a million a day.²⁴ After his death his empire broke up and his successors could never attain financial solvency.

When in 985 A.D. Ṣamṣām al-Dawlah (983—87 A.D.) sought to levy a tenth of the price on the sale of genuine silken and woollen stuff, the town of Baghdād rebelled and forced him to withdraw his orders. In 998 A.D. this measure was again introduced and as before led to open rebellion. The people prevented the holding of Friday service in the old town and set fire to a house where tax-rolls were kept. The rioters were punished, but only the tax on genuine silk was retained.²⁵ Something resembling an income tax was introduced by Ṣamṣām's wazir Ibn Sa'dān²⁶ in 983 A.D. Sometimes private labour was also taxed; Ibn Mākūlā²⁷ (d. 1038 A.D.), Jalāl al-Dawlah's wazir imposed taxes even on porters who carried dates and other merchandise to boats.²⁸

Quite a large proportion of revenue was derived from irregular sources. Among these was the share seized by the state of the property of deceased persons. Even the property of wazirs like al-Muhallabī and Fakhr al-Mulk²⁹ (d. 1016 A.D.) was not spared on their death, and a death duty of 80,000 dinars was imposed on the son of the wazir Abū Ghālib³⁰ (d. 1021 A.D.) on the latter's death.³¹

Another device for raising ready money was the fining of private individuals or government servants. It was frequently resorted to by the 'Abbāsids, and was known as *Muṣūḍarah*. Ibn Shīrẓād even appointed spies to detect persons in possession of concealed wealth.³² Abul Faḡl,³³ Bakhtiyār's wazir, fined merchants and respectable citizens, irrespective of their being Dhimmīs or Muslims. Even the Caliphs were fined at times. Thus in 971 A.D. Bakhtiyār made al-Mutī' (946—74 A.D.) pay him 400,000 dinars—a fact that became widely known.³⁴

Even such a corrupt practice as the sale of offices was resorted to. Muḥammad Ibn 'Ubaidullāh,³⁵ al-Muqtadir's wazir, placed seven governors within twenty days on a single city in Iraq and appointed five persons to the same post in Mūsāl, who assembled on the same day in

the *khān* of 'Ukbarā.³⁶ With Mu'izz al-Dawlah this was a common practice. He farmed out the post of Qādī al-Quḍāt against an annual payment of 200,000 dirhams. Similarly he farmed out *ḥisbah*.³⁷ After the death of al-Ṣāhib in 994 A.D. disgraceful bargaining for the post began in Iran. A successor was chosen, but another high official offered eight million dirhams for it, against the six millions paid by the one already holding the office. The prince graciously remitted two millions to each and appointed them both; with the result that ten million dirhams found their way into the prince's pocket. They jointly issued and signed orders, and in the event of war they cast lots to decide who should lead the army. But this state of affairs could not go on for long. It ended in one of these two getting the other assassinated.³⁸

Lastly, we come to ordinary bribes (*Marāfiq*) whose acceptance by Bakhtiyār became a regular practice. From Ibn Baqiyah³⁹ in particular, while the latter was still a controller of his kitchen, he used to receive a sum of 10,000 dirhams every month and entered into an agreement with him against the heads of the *Diwāns* and clerks. Besides this, Ibn Baqiyah also bribed him in the form of the presents of slaves, horses and donkeys.⁴⁰ Bribery was rife among government servants, and every one who made profits by unlawful means, was in the habit of bribing the more influential courtiers. Ordinary clerks also exacted bribes whenever an opportunity presented itself.⁴¹

As a result of these malpractices two things were bound to happen—deterioration in the administration and availing of every opportunity by government servants of making money and foiling all measures of its being taken away. Badī' al-Zamān Ḥamadānī (d. 1008 A.D.) condemns a Qādī of the Buwayhids in these words: "Woe to men, when a person who is appointed Qādī knows nothing but to abuse and has no distinction except the dereliction of duty. Imagine him as the grub that is not found except in the blankets of the orphans, or the locust that does not descend except on green fields, or the dacoit who does not break save into the walls of the treasury of trusts."⁴² "The conduct of the Buwayhid officials and qādīs with the people," says al-Khwārizmī (d. 1013 A.D.), "is similar to that of a cat with rats."⁴³ The remuneration paid to government servants went high. The remuneration in higher government services was 33 dinars, that is, £ 165 a day.⁴⁴ To prevent the confiscation of their wealth by the Government, people hid it or buried it. But even this did not often avail. When al-Ṣāhib (d. 994 A.D.) who had ruled North Persia

as the all-powerful wazir for many years, died, his house was forthwith put under guard. The Prince personally conducted a search, and found a purse with receipts for 150,000 dinars deposited elsewhere. He at once had the deposits collected, and all that was found in his house and treasury was taken away to the palace.⁴⁵

The wealth thus amassed was squandered on objects and pursuits that gave pleasure to men in power, or on various forms of dazzling exhibits and curios. Enormous sums were spent on the construction of palatial buildings, beautifully laid out gardens, on the ornamentation of ceilings, walls and floors, on clothes and drinks, on music and dancings on slaves and eunuchs, and on favourites, both boys and girls.

Al-Baghdādī (1002—71 A.D.) describes grotesquely the visit of a Roman ambassador to the court of Al-Muqtadir (908—932 A.D.), of which only a brief summary is given here. Al-Muqtadir had a thousand eunuchs, besides thousands of full-sized statues of handsome boys and various animals. The ambassador was led into a house of trees, one of which was made of silver weighing 500,000 dirhams. On its branches perched silver birds, with mechanism hidden inside them that made them twitter. The palace had curtains embroidered with gold and silver, with pictures of elephants, horses and various other animals; their number exceeded 39,000. The ambassador then entered a spacious building containing all sorts of animals, horses, elephants and birds in thousands. Then he came to a big hall, with gardens on either side. In it were birds carved out of stone, fountains ornamented with silver, vines clothed in silk from top to bottom, and fifteen cavaliers mounted on horses and clad in silver and gold.....In the end the ambassador was ushered into the presence of al-Muqtadir, seated in the famous al-Tāj beside Dajlah, clad in gold, on an ebony throne studded with precious stones.⁴⁶ Such was the life of al-Muqtadir, one who had only a semblance of authority.

‘Adud al-Dawlah laid out a garden on which the recurring expenditure exceeded five million dirhams.⁴⁷ The wazirs and governors copied these examples. Ibn al-Furāt⁴⁸, the wazir of al-Muqtadir, had property worth 10 million dinars, yielding an annual revenue of two million dinars. He ate his food with spoons carved out of pure crystal and never used a spoon twice. At his table at least 30 such spoons were placed only for his use.⁴⁹ Al-Muhallabī was very fond of roses. It is said that in three days 1,000 dinars were spent on buying roses, that were used for perfuming his room, or were cast into

the fountain so that rosewater might be sprinkled on the companions who met in his house.⁵⁰

A common form of pleasure was to gather and sit in the evening around tables set for drinking. Savants, poets, literateurs sat at these tables. They talked, had discussions and enjoyed the songs and dances of slave girls and boys that were trained at great expense for the purpose. Every house of distinction swarmed with accomplished girls and boys. These meetings led to the evolution of table manners and approved conduct in bouts, talks and discussions, which the most cultured circles of Baghdād were very particular to observe. Later books came to be written for the purpose of preserving and passing on this code of manners to posterity. Besides these private gatherings there were meetings open to all where public girls danced, sang and attracted wealthy men, deflated their purses and then left them. It became a sort of trade.

Coming to the middle class, the poets and savants were of two types. Those who could gain access to the courts of princes or wazirs, enjoyed the benefits of their company and were lavishly rewarded. This gave a fillip to the rise of the form of poetry called *Madīḥ* (panegyric). The common theme of this poetry was the generosity, kindness, learning and the patronage of art and sciences by its patrons, but not their justice or service to the community.⁵¹

This easy access to money or fame was, however, not without its dangers. To please one's patron, and to entertain him in gatherings, one had often to bear a loss of self-respect or suffer the qualms of conscience. Those who were not prepared for this had to be content with bare subsistence. Even those who followed the degrading vogue sometimes failed to secure their object. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī⁵² (d. 1009 A.D.), the great literary genius, rightly called the 'second Jāḥiẓ', had to earn his living by copying books. At times his food was only green leaves. He had to degrade himself by begging or by composing verses which no self-respecting would descend to writing.⁵³ Abū Sulaimān al-Manṭiqī⁵⁴ (d. 1001 A.D.), the great logician of his age, had always inadequate food. All his energy, learning and erudition failed to provide him with a square meal or defray the rent of his house.⁵⁵ Many others⁵⁶ had to share the same fate.

The condition of the other sections of the middle class was, however, better. Though the changes in the government and the vicissitudes of the upper class had their adverse affects on trade, industry and agriculture, yet except those places which were the scenes of upheavals, the rest of the Islamic world made progress in these fields. Trade and commerce

flourished. Such ports as Baghdād, Baṣrah, Sirāf, Cairo and Alexandria were centres of active land and maritime commerce. Traders reached as far as China in the east and Spain and Morocco in the west.⁵⁷

Industry was also developed and expanded. Different countries and cities came to specialise in the production of different commodities. Iran was famous for silken clothes, Egypt for textiles and Samarkand for paper. Agriculture forged ahead. Iraq was noted for wheat and Yaman for grapes. The production of fruits, vegetables and flowers was also promoted. The preparation of perfumes flourished in Damascus, Shirāz, Jur and other towns.

The condition of the majority of the agricultural population, small traders and artisans also improved. If there had been peace and security, and if the revenue system and general administration had been a little better, the common man would have enjoyed greater prosperity. The general advancement in the times of ‘Aḍud al-Dawlah bears testimony to this fact.

But the condition of the regions that were the scenes of constant political changes and consequent economic disturbances, presents a deplorable contrast. Iraq, specially Baghdād, had to suffer most. Al-Maqdisī, writing about the year 985 A.D. laments the condition of the whole of Iraq. “Baghdād in particular,” he says, “presents a scene of turmoil and agitation. Prices are very high. People are crushed under heavy taxes, and subdued by increasing oppression. The city is every day on decline.”⁵⁸ Though the reign of ‘Aḍud al-Dawlah was marked by general prosperity, yet the revenues of Babylonia were constantly diminishing. He increased the taxes but could not cope with the hoarders. The result was that a number of people assembled before the palace of his wazir Ibn Sa’dān and clamoured for bread. It is said that when they retired, the wazir said, “why don’t they take bran.”⁵⁹ The times before and after him were worse in the history of Baghdād. This state of affairs drove a number of men to robbery and gangsterism, and the city was often looted and robbed. In 927 A.D. it first fell into the hands of ruffians who became more and more audacious with the gradual weakening of the government.⁶⁰ A group of people known as Shaṭṭārīs had no means of livelihood other than robbery. They often led agitations and engineered revolts.⁶¹

SOCIAL AND MORAL LIFE

The political and economic deterioration was further accentuated by racial and sectarian hostilities and riots, which in turn were

augmented by them. Racially the population was composed of Arabs, Persians and Turks. Already in the third century the Turks after murdering al-Mutawakkil (861 A.D.) had seized the government and the army. They were Sunnī by faith, believers in Ash'arite theology, champion of *taqlīd* in *fiqh*, hostile to all free thinking and intolerant of the slightest heresy. Martial in spirit, rude and cruel in their behaviour, their atrocities knew no bounds, of which every one, Arab or Persian, was the victim. In the first quarter of the century their domination had become a curse. The Shī'ites and Mu'tazilites suffered most, but when the Buwayhids captured the Amarat and ousted the Turks, the position was reversed. Shī'aism was favoured, I'tizāl revived and Sunnīs were terrorised. In Baghdād Shī'ās and Sunnīs lived in separate quarters, and this applied to the other large cities also. Often the population was mixed. On occasions the seething hostilities burst suddenly into a conflagration. Hardly a year would pass without a clash or open war between different racial groups. This racial antagonism accentuated by religious differences was reflected in the literature of the time. Each group had its own poet and writer, who sang or wrote of the superiority of their race, its artistic creations, achievements and distinctions. Not only literature but all the departments of public life were plagued by this disease. Nepotism, sectarian interests and racial prejudices had their worst effect on appointments in the army and in the civil administration, and social and cultural privileges were conferred on the members of the respective groups.

The fourth century begins with the decline of the Turks. Their internal schisms, the weakening of their original spirit, the loosening of their hold on the government, the breaking up of the Caliphate, the decline in revenue, and the perpetual wars between the new principalities went to foster a sense of making the best of a losing business. A spirit of vulgar hedonism and sensuality seized the majority of the upper class. The royalty, deprived of real authority, gradually came to lose all sense of responsibility and threw itself headlong into pleasure. The nobility abused its authority, squeezed out money from all sources, and squandered it on music, wine and women. The army and the administration were afflicted with this spirit. The condition worsened as a result of the constant influx of slave girls and boys captured in wars. Markets were flooded with all sorts of slaves, girls and boys, white and black, Roman and Turkish, African and Persian. Each house had a number of them and they ran into thousands in palaces.⁶² Such a vile practice as homosexuality was rampant. The

literature of the time is full of the discussion of the qualities and characteristics of different kinds of slaves.⁶³

In meetings wine and music were common means of entertainment. Even the savants and the religious dignitaries sometimes participated in these meetings. Al-Thaʿālibī (961—1038 A.D.) describes a drinking bout in the house of the wazir al-Muhallabī. "On two nights every week, his companions assembled at the table and indulged in degrading orgies of drinking and debauchery. Among them, beside others, were Quraiʿah⁶⁴ (d. 978 A.D.), Ibn Maʿrūf⁶⁵ (d. 991 A.D.), al-Tanākhī,⁶⁶ the Qāḍī, all with long grey beards. When all of them were seated in their proper places, music was played and their sensual impulses aroused, they would put aside the garb of sobriety and piety and indulge in drinking wine, each out of a golden cup, weighing not less than 100 mithqāls. Then they would continue talking till their cups were empty. They would sprinkle wine on each other and would dance together. But in the morning they returned to their offices, in full possession of their dignity and sobriety."⁶⁷ In these meetings fellow-drinkers (Nudamāʾ) recited poems, and told tales, often obscene and erotic. Miskawaih also gives his own recollections of such meetings and talks.⁶⁸

The spirit of sensuous hedonism emanating from the elite had infected the middle class also. Various festivals in which the population thronged without any distinction of creed or religion provided a new outlet for this spirit. Notwithstanding the Islamic injunctions relating to abstinence from the festivals of other religions, the Muslims, especially in Baghdād, celebrated all Christian festivals, most of which were nothing more than revivals of much older heathen practices. "Indeed," writes Adam Mez, "many Christian places of pilgrimage in Iraq and Egypt were old heathen places of worship. With their fine gardens and cool drinking places, they were the popular haunts of the Baghdādians intent on pleasure. The pre-Islamic New Year's Day was generally celebrated with exchange of gifts."⁶⁹ A number of other examples can also be cited.

With this pleasure-seeking went a deplorable indifference to the welfare of the community, and negligence of duty particularly by persons holding positions of authority. We have already described the life of the caliphs, anirs, wazirs and officials. In the saints and philosophers indifference had declined into apathy. They had lost all hopes of remedying the maladies, and had withdrawn themselves into cloisters and reading rooms. Any talk of reform was considered as idle gossip, and the reformists were looked down as idiots.⁷⁰

So overpowering was the lust for pleasure that those who tried to

fight it were cast aside. In the midst of the ninth century Al-Muhtadī bi-Allāh (869—70 A.D.) wishing to improve the situation, prohibited drinking, dancing and music, curtailed drastically the expenses of his own palace, removed articles of gold and silver and turned them into coins, broke statues and lived on 100 dirhams a day. But such a change soon brought him into collision with the Turks, who forced him to abdicate. He was thrown into confinement, where he died in a very short time.⁷¹ To reform the common people of Baghdād who had also been afflicted with the lust for pleasure, the Ḥanbalites made repeated efforts. In 934 A.D., for instance, they assaulted the houses of military officials and common people, spilt *nabīdh*, beat songstresses and broke musical instruments. But all their protest and fury was unavailing.⁷² An extreme instance of the expression of this spirit of the age is found in the poetry of Ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥajjāj,⁷³ formerly a Muḥtasib (Censor of Public Morals), but later the court poet of Bakhtiyār. He introduced a literature that was full of filth and obscenity, and claimed to be the prophet of obscenity. Because of its filth his *diwān* (collection of poems) was later proscribed for young people by the police. But his filth did not offend his contemporaries and his poems were in great demand in different countries. Often his *diwān* would sell for 50 to 70 dinars.⁴⁷ The same immoral strain pervades the writings of Abul Muṭahhir al-Azadī,⁷⁵ whose dramatic monologue depicts in excellent Maqāmāt style the luxurious and sensual life of Baghdād as enjoyed by the upper strata of society, unaffected by political instability.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Morality has two sources of inspiration. One is external which derives from the social and economic conditions. This we have discussed. The other is internal which lies in basic ideology and religion. So far as the intellectual interpretation and elaboration of the Qur’ān and the Ḥadīth, defence of articles of faith, formulation of rules governing the common life, and development of other sciences subservient to this purpose are concerned, this age records a tremendous advance upon the preceding ages. Baghdād in Iraq and Rayy and Isphahān in Jabal produced a number of great men who occupy a place of honour in the development of religious sciences.⁷⁶ But inspite of the tremendous progress in these sciences the true spirit of religion embracing the sense of responsibility before God, fear of the painful consequences of evil acts, and love of His pleasure, was gradually fading.

Ṣūfism was a reaction against this growing tendency towards vulgar hedonism and the awful hollowness of the religious spirit. Basically it was an effort to revive the true spirit of Islam, but the political and economic conditions of the time frustrated it. In the beginning the Ṣāfi was one who enjoined upon the people the performance of acts pleasing to God, and thus set himself in opposition to the government. But later the ṣūfī gradually deflected from this ideal. Passive forbearance of evil, submission to the Divine will, perpetual remembrance of God culminating in ecstatic union with Him, took its place; and contempt of this world, asceticism and withdrawal from the affairs of the society were applauded.

A new religious ideal was gradually evolving. It was described as the gnosis of God (Ma'rafat Allāh). It was an ideal of contemplation, not of action, of the cloister and not of society. In this respect ṣūfism was completely in accord with the ideal of theology and philosophy. They differed in their approach but as to the end they agreed.

In the beginning ṣūfism, like every movement, was violent. Consequently it soon came under the fire of the orthodoxy; Al-Ḥallāj⁷⁷ was hanged in 922 A.D. After his death ṣūfism was on the defensive. Books now appeared that attempted to reconcile ṣūfism with the Qurān and Sunnah. Though the foundations of the ṣūfī theory and practice were laid in the 9th century, yet ṣūfism could never become a driving force. It did not provide the remedy for the maladies of the age. Al-Muhtadī fought these evils, though he was defeated. Ṣūfism left the world to Satan and retired into safe seclusion.

Theology (Kalām) was never designed to provide the badly needed remedy for the ills of the age. It aimed at satisfying reason and removing doubts concerning matters of faith. Al-Ash'arī⁷⁸ (d. 935 A.D.) had already routed the unbridled rationalism of I'tizāl, which however, had not finally surrendered. Al-Bāqallānī⁷⁹ (d. 1012 A.D.) and others rose in this century and carried further the task of their master. But Ash'arism had not till now established itself. Ḥanbalites always suspected it and were bitterly hostile to it. Not until 1000 A.D. did it assume any importance in Iraq. The Ḥanbalites forbade the admission of al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī (1002-71 A.D.) into the chief mosque of Baghdād for his Ash'arite leanings.⁸⁰

Apart from the orthodox, the Ash'arite theology satisfied neither the ṣūfīs nor the philosophers. Al-Ghazālī⁸¹ (d. 1111 A.D.) writing in the 5th century expresses his dissatisfaction with it in these terms. "It was of little use in the case of one who admitted nothing at all save logically necessary truths. Theology was unable to cure the malady of which

I complained.....(Theologians) did not arrive at results sufficient to dispel universally the darkness of confusion due to the different views of men.”⁸² And Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī (d. 1009 A.D.), the ṣūfī and the philosopher, speaks of the theologians in highly abusive terms, and considers them a curse to Islam.⁸³ Abū Sulaimān (d. 1001 A.D.) another friend of Miskawaih condemns theology as fallacious and confusing.⁸⁴

These conditions generated a spirit of scepticism, and led people to scoff at religion and its values. Al-Rāzī⁸⁵ (d. 925 A.D.), the great physician, was a sceptic; he had no belief in prophecy or the hereafter. Nor had Abul ‘Alā’ al-Mu‘arrī⁸⁶ (d. 1058 A.D.), the poet philosopher. He ridiculed every thing that was Islamic. The evil that he saw triumphant around him made of him a pessimist. Both these strains of pessimism and scepticism are found in his poems and writings.

Another factor that contributed to this spirit was the antagonism that different juristic sects came to entertain against one another. Ḥanafites and Shāfītes of Rayy, for instance, united against the Shī‘ites and fought them. But after they had driven them out, they began to fight among themselves.⁸⁷

The philosophy of the age did not fully succeed in reconciling Greek ideas with Islamic beliefs and ideals. The system that al-Kindī⁸⁸ (d. 873 A.D.) and al-Fārābī⁸⁹ (d. 950) worked out did not equally satisfy the demands of reason, and the aspirations, beliefs and values of their brethren. The Ikhwān al-Ṣafā⁹⁰ started by proclaiming their resolve to purify the Sharī‘ah by reinterpreting it in philosophical terms, but ended in undermining its very foundations. Their profession to intermingle the Sharī‘ah with philosophy was a camouflage for their hidden motives, and a fine bait to gain new converts to their views. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī writes that he did not find a single member of their party observing the *arkān* of religion, obeying the Qur’ān or Sunnah, or paying any heed to the obligatory duties or the supererogatory ones.⁹¹

Abū Sulaimān, the logician and the head of the Fārābian school in his time, did not approve this idea of the intermingling of the Sharī‘ah and philosophy. He believed each of them to be completely independent and right at the same time, reaching the truth by different approaches and expressing its revelations in different terminologies.⁹² About the works of the Ikhwān he says : “They have taken pains but completely failed, and have kept on wandering without arriving at the truth.”⁹³ And Abū Ḥaiyān condemns it as a bundle of absurdities and illusions.⁹⁴

The political ideology of the philosophers was considered by men at the helm of affairs. Abū Ḥaiyān was asked by Ibn Sa‘dān, the wazīr

of ‘Aḡud al-Dawlah, what was the best type of government. He suggested the Platonic-Fārābīan ideal of the philosopher king. On this the wazīr said: “Philosophers are the most unrealistic.”⁹⁵

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

In striking contrast with this gloomy picture of the political, economic, social, moral and religious life in the fourth century, is the view presented by science, learning, literature and art. The tradition that was set by al-Kindī (d. 873 A.D.) and al-Fārābī (d. 950 A.D.) in philosophy was continued by Yaḡyā bin ‘Adī⁹⁶ (975 A.D.), Abū Sulaimān (d. 1001 A.D.), the logician, and Miskawaih (d. 1030 A.D.), who contributed in their own field to the growth of philosophy that reached its acme in the all-embracing system of Ibn Sīnā⁹⁷ (d. 1037 A.D.). Most of the Greek literature was translated from its Syrian version or directly from the original, and commentaries and new books were also written. In the later half of the century we find the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā busy in epitomising the knowledge of the age into their encyclopædia.

But far more spectacular was the progress in literature and sciences which put forth their most luxuriant flowers under the patronage of the courts and of the nobility. The reason for this unprecedented development lay in the rise, after the dissolution of the Caliphate, of several cultural centres throughout the length and breadth of the Islamic world, which successfully carried on the tradition set by Baghdād.

Buwayhids’ share of the territories of the Caliphate was proportionately larger and their contribution to the elevation of culture was comparatively greater. They were fortunate in having a number of wazīrs who were themselves men of learning and patronised art and literature. Al-Muhallabī,⁹⁸ Ibn al-‘Amīd⁹⁹ and Al-Ṣāḥib b. ‘Abbād¹⁰⁰ were themselves poets and writers of high rank and it was because of their patronage that al-Isphahānī,¹⁰¹ Hilāl al-Ṣābī,¹⁰² Miskawaih and a host of scientists advanced knowledge in their fields. Bakhtiyār was himself a poet and so was ‘Aḡud al-Dawlah. It was mostly in the latter’s reign in Iraq and Persia that astronomy, mathematics, medicine, history and geography were developed. ‘Aḡud al-Dawlah granted ample allowances to jurists, Qur’ānic commentators, traditionalists, theologians, poets, grammarians, genealogists, physicians, astrologers, mathematicians and engineers. Talent and ability had free scope. Among the scholars whom he patronised mention may be made of Abū ‘Alī al-Fārsī,¹⁰³ Abū Sa‘īd al-Sirāfī¹⁰⁴ and ‘Uthmān b. Jinnī,¹⁰⁵ the grammarians; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān¹⁰⁶ al-Ṣūfī and

Ibn 'al-A'lam,¹⁰⁷ the astronomers; Abul Qāsim al-Antākī,¹⁰⁸ the great mathematician; Jibra'īl b. 'Abd Allāh b. Bakht Yīshū,¹⁰⁹ the renowned physician and Abul Khayr,¹¹⁰ the famous surgeon; Ibrāhīm al-Ṣābī,¹¹¹ the foremost prose writer of the age; and Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Salām¹¹² and Ibn Nubātah al-Sa'dī,¹¹³ the most distinguished poets. 'Aḍud al-Dawlah's interest in medicine was great. He established a hospital at Baghdād and another at Shīrāz, each with its staff of doctors, and equipped with plants, instruments and beds. Around this hospital there grew up a school of medicine that produced great works on the subject.¹¹⁴

He also established a great library, a practice that was followed by almost every patron of learning. Sābūr¹⁴⁵ (d. 1025 A.D.), beside establishing a library, also founded a Dār al-'Ilm in which a number of professors gave lectures, which every student was welcome to attend. This Academy was also a meeting place for men engaged in literary pursuits. When Abul 'Alā' al-Mu'arrī visited Baghdād in 1009 A.D. he not only participated in a discussion by eminent men of letters in the Academy but was also entertained with the musical performance of a sprightly songstress.

Apart from the court circle, a host of scholars, bearing all sorts of hardships and living a life of poverty were busy producing works of lasting fame. Another characteristic of this age is that a number of works of an encyclopædic nature in philosophy, literature and medicine were compiled. This shows the growth and maturity that sciences and learning had attained. Ibn al-Nadīm's (d. 995 A.D.) al-Fihrist (Index of authors and works) bears further testimony to this development.

This is a brief sketch of the conditions, trends and spirit of the people in West Iran and Iraq particularly Baghdād, the immediate environment that was most effective in the formation of the outlook and ideas of Miskawaih. We will now proceed to study his life and career.

II

Abū 'Alī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ya'qūb Miskawaih,¹¹⁶ philosopher, historian, philologist, poet and physician, was born in 936 A.D. (325 A.H.) in the district of Rayy in Persia. Opinions differ as to his correct name. Some of the earlier writers like al-Khwansārī,¹¹⁷ al-Baihaqī¹¹⁸ and al-Shahrzūrī¹¹⁹ and Chalpī¹²⁰ name him Ibn Miskawaih, but the majority calls him simply Miskawaih. In this group are included men like Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī,¹²¹ al-Tha'ālibī,¹²² al-Khwārizmī,¹²³ Abū Sulaimān

al-Mantiqī,¹²⁴ Yāqūt,¹²⁵ al-Qiftī,¹²⁶ Ibn Abī Uṣaibi'ah,¹²⁷ and al-ʿĀmilī.¹²⁸ Abū Ḥaiyān, Abū Sulaimān and al-Khwārizmī were his friends, consequently their evidence is more reliable. Miskawaih is a title and is most probably derived from the Persian mushk (musk), a view suggested by al-ʿĀmilī.¹²⁹

The author of the *Muʿjam al-Udabāʾ* has expressed the view that Miskawaih was first a Zoroastrian and later embraced Islam.¹³⁰ But it is not correct. His name Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb is sufficient to disprove this view. Further, the comprehensive vision and the deep insight into Islam that is revealed in his works can hardly be expected from a new convert. It was his grand father, and not he, who was a Zoroastrian and who subsequently embraced Islam. That he was a Shīʿah is supported by a number of evidences. Throughout his career he served Shīʿite princes and wazirs; his writings also contain a number of references to ʿAlī in the characteristic Shīʿite fashion,¹³¹ and al-ʿĀmilī mentions his books in his *Aʿyān al-Shīʿah*.¹³²

Little is known about his early life and education. He came from a well-to-do family which enjoyed the regard and esteem of its town folk. His father did not pay much attention to the education and training of his son, and died while Miskawaih was still young, consequently he was left entirely to the care and supervision of his mother. The irreparable loss of his father handicapped his moral development. He contracted the evil habits to which his contemporaries were addicted. To these undesirable habits Miskawaih himself alludes in the *Tahdhīb* (p. 42). Another incident went to augment this. His mother married another man far below in age. She was very old at the time while her new husband was quite young. He looked like Miskawaih's elder brother. Miskawaih did not approve of this marriage, yet he could not leave his mother. Probably what attracted his mother's young husband to her was the position of her family and her wealth. Miskawaih was very much shocked by this marriage. The letter¹³³ which al-Khwārizmī wrote to console him on this occasion reveals how deeply he was affected by it. It estranged him from his mother, and deprived him of affection from his surviving parent. It, however, whipped his determination to carve out a career for himself.

Probably his mother helped him to complete the first stage of his education. It consisted, as was usual in those days, of the Qurʾān, grammar, literature, Traditions, *fiqh*, history, particularly of the Arabs, arithmetic and elementary geometry. He could have found no difficulty in completing this education as these subjects were taught in regular classes

in mosques and in the houses of the nobility. But higher education was very costly, only the wealthy could secure the services of a learned tutor for their sons. We have no information concerning Miskawaih's teachers. Books were his only teachers and libraries his only school, where he worked hard throughout his long life with untiring spirit and insatiable desire for knowledge.

Rayy, the place where he was born, was a well known centre of learning. It was the capital of al-'Irāq al-'Ajamī under the Buwayhids. Al-Maḡdisī (c. 985 A.D.) describes Rayy in glowing terms as follows: "It is a piece of land, neat and clean, a city with abundant water, delicious fruit, large fields and gardens. Its intelligentsia are respected, the common men are clever, and women are beautiful, wise and competent in managing their houses. It has schools and industries, and holds public meetings. Its people are wise, rulers learned, police renowned, and orators highly educated. It's one of the prides of Islam—mother of cities, within its boundaries there are a number of men known for their piety, and a host of *qurrā'* (reciters of the Qur'ān), savants, ascetics and warriors."¹³⁴ Abū Bakr Razī (d. 932 A.D.), the famous physician and scientist, was the product of this land. He died only five years before Miskawaih was born. In him Miskawaih could not have failed to find a source of inspiration. He must have entertained grand ambitions in such an atmosphere.

The desire to be independent of his mother, and the avarice for money lead him to study and practise alchemy. He read books of Rāzī and Jābir bin Ḥaiyān and carried on experiments. Probably a desire to know the truth about alchemy also lay behind these pursuits. Miskawaih sincerely believed in the possibility of alchemy, as Abū Ḥaiyān reports.¹³⁵ This is not at all surprising, because a number of distinguished men of learning, such as Yaḥyā b. 'Adī, the Christian philosopher, and Abū Sulaimān al-Manṭiqī also believed in its practicability.¹³⁶ Later on, however, his experience convinced him of the futility of such an enterprise, and he subsequently gave up the idea.

How he came to Baghdād and obtained the favour of the wazīr al-Muḥallabī is not known. Soon he came very close to him, who appointed him his *nadīm* (fellow-drinker). Beside this primary function he also participated in the discussions on philosophy and literature that were held at the table of the wazīr. His office as a *nadīm* led him to compose and recite poems, immoral and obscene. The amirs and wazīrs were, he says, very fond of hearing such poetry. This work was not repellent to him, because the general spirit of the age and the usual

trends in such circles in which he spent his early age were quite in harmony with it. Like others of his age he fully availed himself of this opportunity for satisfying his lust for pleasure.

To this life of pleasure, to the early neglect of his proper education and training and to his addiction to evil habits, Miskawaih has himself alluded in a passage in his *Tahdhīb*. He writes : "He who does not receive proper education and is not disciplined in the rules of the *Sharī'ah* and morality in his childhood; but learns instead obscene poetry, and is misled by its false glamour, believing to be right what is in fact wrong, mistaking bad for good, for instance, the poetry of Imra' al-Qais and al-Nābighah; and then happens to get access to some notary or rich man who bestows his favour on him for such vicious poetry which he recites to him, or composes for his pleasure; and is encouraged by such friends as cooperate with him in the attainment of sensuous pleasures of food, drink, clothes, strong horses, handsome slaves, and all other objects of beauty, as has happened to me at some period; and then indulges in their enjoyment completely forgetting the attainment of that happiness for which he has been made—he should consider this a great misfortune and tragedy instead of success and progress."¹³⁷

Miskawaih enjoyed his association with the wazir al-Muhallabī, whom he admired for his learning, his favour and patronage. His admiration for the wazir approaches enthusiasm. When the wazir died in 963 A.D. Miskawaih came back to Rayy and associated himself with Abul Faql Muḥammad Ibn al-ʿAmīd (d. 970 A.D.), the wazir of Rukn al-Dawlah, who appointed him his librarian. He also had the honour of teaching his son Abul Fath. Ibn al-ʿAmīd's library was very big, containing books on different sciences, philosophy, religion, literature, history and medicine. So dear was this library to him that when once his house was robbed and everything was taken away and he was informed that nothing but his library was safe, he thanked God and said : "What has been taken away can be replaced, but it is impossible to replace my library."¹³⁸

Miskawaih made full use of this library and fed himself on its great treasures. On the death of Ibn al-ʿAmīd in 970 A.D. his son Abul Fath succeeded him as wazir and Miskawaih continued to hold charge of his library. But before long the wazir fell upon evil days and was put in prison in 976 A.D. Miskawaih then returned to Baghdad. ʿAḍud al-Dawlah now engaged him as his *nadīm*. Some times he served as his ambassador at some courts,¹³⁹ but primarily he was the librarian of his great treasury of books. He had gained the confidence of the Prince to such an extent that on occasions he served as his private secretary.¹⁴⁰

When 'Aḡud al-Dawlah died in 983 A.D. he appears to have gone into hiding, in the house of one Ibn al-Khammār, and Abū Ḥaiyān asserts¹⁴² that during these days he had lent Miskawaih a commentary on the Isagoge of Porphyry and the Categories of Aristotle. This is when Miskawaih was forty seven. This shows that he began the study of philosophy very late. However, he seriously applied himself to its study and his works show how excellently he mastered it.

After 'Aḡud al-Dawlah Miskawaih transferred his allegiance to Ṣamṣām al-Dawlah. After his death he served Sharf al-Dawlah (987—89 A.D.) and then his successor Bahā al-Dawlah till the latter's death in 1012 A.D. Throughout this period he worked as librarian, and devoted himself to writing books on history and philosophy and other subjects.

After serving the Buwayhids for full thirty seven years Miskawaih went with his other friends to Khwārizm Shāh¹⁴³ and joined the circle of his physicians. That he was a physician also is mentioned by Ibn Abī Usaibi'ah, who has named two of his books on medical subjects, namely, *Kitāb al-Ashribah* (Book of Draughts) and *Kitāb al-Ṭabīkh* (Cookery Book).¹⁴⁴ Miskawaih was eighty now. By this time he had almost finished his *Tajārib al-Umam* and *Al-Hawāmil wa Al-Shawōmil* and was busy writing his 'Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq'. It is here that he met his talented contemporary Ibn Sīnā (d. 1036 A.D.). One day Ibn Sīnā, in order to test Miskawaih's knowledge threw a nut towards him, while the latter was teaching ethics to his students, and asked him to calculate its weight in barley grains. This offended the old philosopher who retorted by throwing down some written sheets on ethics, telling him first to mend his behaviour and ask afterwards.¹⁴⁵ Young and ambitious to prove his abilities, Ibn Sīnā had similarly offended a number of great men of letters of his time like Abū al-Faraj b. al-Ṭaiyib and Abū al-Qāsim al-Kirmānī.¹⁴⁶

Miskawaih lastly came to 'Anīd al-Malik,¹⁴⁷ who had great affection and regard for him, particularly due to his advanced age. Life now, as it is evident from his poems, hung heavy upon him. He was ninety six when death overtook him. He was buried in Isphahān where he died.

While he was with Khwārizm Shāh, his life had taken a new turn. Of his early indulgence in pleasure, and his addiction to evil habits which were accentuated by his office as a *nadīm* of al-Muhallabī, we have already made a mention. A specimen of his poems of this period that is preserved by al-Tha'ālibī in his *Tatimmah al-Yatīmah*,¹⁴⁸ reveals the extent to which he had indulged in this life. This phase,

as we have noted, was not unnatural for the youth of that age. But with the passage of youth, with growing interest in philosophy and especially ethics, with deepening insight into the course of history and with the awakening of conscience by observing the fate of individuals and nations, Miskawaih became gradually convinced of the role and value of morality, and of the disastrous results of a life of pleasure. So profound was this new realisation that he decided to change his life completely. With great difficulty he gave up his old habits, and acquired new virtues. Of this struggle he writes in the *Tahdhīb*: "The reader of this book should know that I have gradually succeeded in uprooting evil from my soul, in old age after the consolidation of habits, and I have waged a great battle."¹⁴⁹

When this change actually occurred we do not know. But it is certain that he experienced a change of his heart quite late in life. He lived it with sincerity, determination and persistence—qualities that made him a great historian, literateur and philosopher. It was because of these qualities that the savant now turned into a saint. The vow¹⁵⁰ that he made to his God at the start of his new career reveals the same conviction, firmness and determination.

His later career records nothing which goes against his vow. Abū Ḥaiyān complains of his miserliness on various occasions and his neglect of duty to his friends in need.¹⁵¹ We have no reason to rebut this charge, yet it relates most likely to the first phase of his life. Nevertheless the extent to which Abū Ḥaiyān has gone in his accusation can hardly be justified. He is very prone to exaggerate things. In recording his impressions of the men of his age or his reactions to their ideas, he always tends to become unbalanced. His wounded vanity and the frustration of his endeavours to gain recognition and to obtain the necessities of life resulted in the perversion of his judgments. Miskawaih had sometimes lapsed into vituperation and vilification of some of his rivals and contemporaries. His lampoon¹⁵² against Al-Ṣāḥib after the latter's death in 994 A.D. is a shocking example of this. It, however, belongs to his pre-repentance period. The incident of Ibn Sīnā's insolence against him shows that by the time he had acquired a complete control over his emotions, he contented himself only with advising Ibn Sīnā to behave in a gentlemanly manner.

Miskawaih had an independence of mind, which Abū Ḥaiyān characterises as an anomaly,¹⁵³ a judgment which is hardly true in view of the sound ideas and balanced opinions that we often find in his writings. Abū Ḥaiyān also tells us that Abul Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī¹⁵⁴

(d. 991 A.D.) delivered lectures at Rayy, taught and wrote for full five years but Miskawaih did not attend these meetings.¹⁵⁵ They had little contact, as if a gulf lay between them. But it was not due to any jealousy or animosity towards al-‘Āmirī. He only did not consider his discussions and lectures worth his while. A specimen of al-‘Āmirī’s moral aphorisms has been included by Miskawaih in his *al-Ḥikmat al-Khālīdah*.

Miskawaih’s view of the relation between philosophy and religion, his reaction to Ṣūfism, his attitude towards theological issues involved in ethics, or his own interpretations of the articles of faith we shall examine in subsequent chapters. However, the general tendencies of the philosophers of his times were more or less shared by him. He was a member of the philosophical circle of Abū Sulaimān, the logician, and an active participant in its discussions. Though as a philosopher he was not of the calibre of al-Kindī or al-Fārābī, but in giving a lucid and systematic exposition of his ideas he surpassed them all.¹⁵⁶ His *al-Fauz al-Aṣghar* bears eloquent testimony to this fact.

Miskawaih was not a metaphysician. His *al-Fauz al-Aṣghar* is not a book on metaphysics. It is rather an attempt to give in a plain and precise language a philosophical interpretation of the three fundamentals of Islam, viz., God, life after death and prophethood. It is a book on theology, with a detailed discussion of the soul, serving also as the basis of his conception of happiness and virtue. The bases of his interpretation of Islamic beliefs are neo-Platonic, and the deeper we go into it, the more vivid become the underlying ideas, so much so that a somewhat coherent picture of the neo-Platonic metaphysics gradually emerges. In his effort to reconcile neo-Platonic ideas with Islamic beliefs, he often deviates from old conceptions or makes original suggestions, though sometimes he takes shelter in obscurity or remains silent. On the whole the book is very systematic and lucid besides being concise.

It is said that he wrote a larger volume on the subject namely ‘*Al-Fauz al-Akbar*.’ This book is not extant, and probably Dr. ‘Abdul ‘Azīz ‘Izzat is right in believing¹⁵⁷ that it is same as the *Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq*.

In ethics, which is his proper field and the centre of his interest, his works are of two kinds ; some are collections of moral aphorisms, while others seriously take up the problems of ethics and discuss them in a scientific way. The *Ins al-Farīd* belonged to the former category, and contained, as Yāqūt says, tales, poems, maxims and proverbs not arranged in chapters. *Al-Siyar* was a treatise on morals, interspersed

with traditions, Qur'anic texts, philosophy and poetry. But the most comprehensive and famous book of this kind is *Al-Ḥikmat al-Khālīdah*, which alone is extant. It is a collection of moral aphorisms and sayings of different thinkers, philosophers and religious men of various nations—Romans, Greeks, Arabs and Persians. It also contains the translation of *Jāwedān-e-Khirad*, probably a Persian work, by Ḥasan b. Sahl (d. 850 A.D.).¹⁵⁸ This book, is an unfailing proof of Miskawaih's extensive study, catholicity of spirit, and the desire to benefit by the wisdom of all nations. The selections invariably impress the mind with the same conception of happiness and virtue. They exhibit the same attitude towards the pleasures of the body, and breathe the same note of asceticism. Their ideal of man is Socrates or a Ṣūfī minus his mysticism.

The second type of his ethical writings are those which constitute the chief source of our study: the *Kitāb al-Sa'adah* and the *Tahdhīb al-Akh'lūq wa Taḥḥīr al-A'rāq*, which therefore need no elaborate introduction here.

Al-Hawāmil wa Al-Shawāmil is another work undertaken in collaboration with Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī. It is in the form of questions and answers. The questions, which are of varied interest, ranging from grammar and literature to physics, astronomy, psychology, ethics and metaphysics, are from Abū Ḥaiyān and their answers have been given by Miskawaih. This is a useful book in as much as it gives us the opinion of our author on so many issues.

Besides Ethics the next subject in which Miskawaih was interested was History. His monumental work on History bears the title of *Tajārib al-Umam* (The Experiences of Nations), and is in six volumes. The last three volumes have been edited and translated by D. S. Margoliouth under the title "Eclipse of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate." This is an invaluable source on the period of the Buwayhids. In his preface to its English edition Prof. Margoliouth writes: "Although this chronicle is marked by some gross examples of carelessness, it is on the whole one of the most instructive in the Arabic language. For a considerable portion of it the author writes about persons whom he knew intimately, and institutions with which he was himself familiar."¹⁵⁹

Von Grunebaum writes: "Historians before him had remained satisfied with accepting them (i.e. political events) at their face value and did not bother about their economic, social and cultural significance. Miskawaih, who analyses competently the long-range effect of

political actions, stands almost alone."¹⁶⁰ "His superiority as historian to Ṭabarī," remarks Prof. Margoliouth, "is very marked."¹⁶¹ His *Tajārib al-Umam* displays interpretative subtlety and enlists an advance in skill of presentation. His insight into human life is profound.¹⁶² His power of character-drawing is remarkable ; each of the host of characters who come upon the stage is easily distinguishable and the most important, of whom the number is very considerable, are exceedingly life like. His appreciation of the wazir Abul Faql Ibn al-ʿAmīd is unsurpassable and rarely equalled in Arabic histeriography for its maturity of personal and political judgment.¹⁶³

He is very objective and judicial in his judgments. Even for ʿAḡud al-Dawlah, probably the ablest Sultan of his time, his sunning up is far more judicial than is that of Abū Shujāʿ. For two of his employees, al-Muhallabī and Ibn al-ʿAmīd I, he has admiration which approaches enthusiasm ; yet this admiration does not induce him to conceal deflections on their part from the path of wisdom and honour.¹⁶⁴

He considers history as a practical discipline with a purely utilitarian purpose. As was characteristic of the Persians, he uses history as a source of practical ethics,¹⁶⁵ and shows that whenever governments and nations have deflected from the path of wisdom and laws of morality, they have inevitably suffered decline and deterioration. Ethics thus is the essence of history ; his interpretation of history is thoroughly moral.

Miskawaih was also a poet. Both Abū Ḥaiyān and al-Thaʿālibī admired his verses which also appear to have satisfied the expert judgment of Ibn al-ʿAmīd I.¹⁶⁶ We have no knowledge, however, of any *dīwān* of his except the verses that have been quoted in *Tatimmah al-Yaʿīmah* by Al-Thaʿālibī. Yāqūt mentions a book *Al-Mustawfī*, which, as he describes, was a collection of odes. It is not extant.

Besides, Miskawaih wrote a number of books and tracts on different subjects, for instance, on arithmetic, politics, biography, etc., some of which are preserved in manuscript at different places. Dr. ʿAbdul ʿAzīz ʿIzzat has enumerated all his works, great or small, published or unpublished.¹⁶⁷ A glance at this list reveals how well read he was and how varied were his interests.

CHAPTER II

Islamic Ethics Before Miskawaih

THOUGH ethics did not attain to the status of a discipline in Islam before Miskawaih, yet moral ideals had long been evolving and ethical problems and concepts had been discussed. Most of them contributed to the formation of Miskawaih's ethics, for a fuller understanding of which, therefore, a study of the main trends in this evolution is essential.

The Greek and other indigenous systems of thought profoundly influenced this development. But its basic source of inspiration was always the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, whose teachings acted as a guiding and controlling factor throughout its course. We cannot understand the emergence of new problems, nor appreciate the interpretation of old concepts, nor realise the remodelling of moral ideals unless we have a knowledge of the teachings of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah on basic problems of ethics, and acquire an insight into their metaphysical foundations—the conception of God, life in this world and in the next, and prophethood.

Unfortunately most of the writings on the ethics of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah do not make any effort to study those injunctions of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah that bear upon various ethical issues, nor do they penetrate into deeper metaphysical ideas which build and nourish moral life. Their best achievement is an exposition of the moral life in the early Islam. And that, too, is very selective, those aspects being highlighted at the cost of others that contrast either with the pre-Islamic or the Western ideal. The theological inquiry of the early period that primarily aimed at understanding some articles of faith, eventually led into some problems of ethics. Thenceforth they were constantly debated. The findings of these inquiries, too, have either remained in oblivion, or have not received due attention. Consequently the impact of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah on these findings has not been fully understood. This omission is also responsible for the false impression that the development of Muslim ethics in subsequent ages is either the work of the philosophers or the ṣūfis.

I shall not venture to offer a detailed account of ethics in the early Islam. That would be too ambitious an undertaking. I only propose to give a brief and coherent sketch of the development of various ethical trends during this period. The limits imposed by this study make it impossible to adduce reasons in support of many points in my account. One cannot help being dogmatic on such occasions.

THE ETHICAL IDEAL OF THE QUR'AN AND THE SUNNAH

Life, according to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, has two phases indissolubly united into one, one before death and the other after it. Death brings a definite change, but does not effect a complete severance. The ideal of life, therefore, cannot be exclusively either this-worldly or other-worldly. The conception of the good is bound to include the good of both the worlds. The Prophet and his followers have been instructed by the Qur'ān to pray for the attainment of the good in this world as well as in the other.¹ Consequently life here cannot be regarded merely as a means for the realization of the good in the life to come. The good of this life is an integral part of the Qur'ānic good. Hence the active interest of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah in different areas of living in this world, e.g., social, economic, legal and other. Further, the life of a Muslim in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah is not that of an individual in vacuum, but of a person in society. His private life is indissolubly bound up with his social life. The good expounded by the Qur'ān is not an individual good, it is social as well. Even life in the Paradise is depicted in the Qur'ān as a sort of community life.² The importance that social relations, social duties and obligations, *amr bi l-ma'rūf* (enjoining good), and holy war possess in Islam, derives from this basic fact that the good in Islam is social. Withdrawal from society or indifference to its well-being is a crime. It has only been permitted in extreme cases, where the minimum of religious performance is found to be impossible. But there, too, bold and patient effort to fight evil has always been given a high place by the Prophet.³

Though the good to be sought in this world is an integral part of the moral ideal, yet in the final reckoning it has less weight than the good to be realised in the next world. For, this life is transient, while the next life is everlasting. Life here is a trial whose results cannot be completely realised in this world because of its inherent limitations. But the fact that this trial consists in the performance of his duties by man as God's vicegerent on earth, makes the realization of the good

in this world a condition for the attainment of the good in the next. Any neglect of the good in this life, therefore, ruins a person's prospects of achieving the good in the next. The Prophet said: "This world is the sowing ground for the next."⁴

The good expounded by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah is both of the soul and the body. The sharp opposition that the thought of the later period upheld between the soul and the body, between the spiritual and the material, is not supported by the Qur'ān or the Sunnah. The pleasures of the body form an integral part of the good along with the happiness of the soul. There is nothing essentially evil in the pleasures of the body. The world is neither good nor evil in itself, its evil or good character depends on the way we live in it. The idea that the advent of man on the earth is a fall, or an expiation from an 'original sin' is absolutely foreign to Islam. On the contrary an active effort for ordering life here according to the principles of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah is an essential element in the human happiness here and hereafter. Renunciation of the world is altogether out of place; and complete abstinence from its pleasures absolutely unjustified. *Rahbānīyah* (monasticism) has been condemned by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.⁵

Every element of human personality finds a place in the ideal presented by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, whether it be reason, the senses, or emotions. They vary in their relative importance, but, granting individual differences, no element is allowed to annihilate another. A minimum in every respect had always been maintained by the Prophet in the life of his companions.⁶ Feeling and action interpenetrate in the Islamic ideal. Love, for instance, is a highly commendable element of the ideal. But it is not mere emotion that is commended. Love-in-action is the desired end. Further, only that conception of action is right which has been defined in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

The ideal of a rounded personality does not, however, preclude the growth of individual traits. There is nothing like a rigid pattern of personality to which every one has to conform. Abū Bakr and 'Umar, Abū Hurayrah and Abū Dhar, Khālīd and 'Alī, 'Uthmān and 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Auf, Ibn Mas'ūd and Ibn 'Abbās, 'Āishah and Ḥafṣah, in spite of sharing the common elements of the Islamic ideal, exhibit a variety of individual characters which are often in sharp contrast.⁷ The Prophet was fully conscious of individual divergences, and has provided for them in his saying, "My companions are like various stars, whomsoever you follow, you will certainly be led along the right path."⁸ This, however, applies to individuals. But society can only

maintain its proper health and attain perfect happiness by following not one section of the companions but the entire group.

The entire life of a Muslim is imbued with a new sense of responsibility. The idea that one has to account before God for all his actions of mind and body dominates his consciousness, which makes the whole life, individual or social, a duty. But this sense of duty is not an imposition, on the contrary it is the revivification and activation of that basic sense of responsibility that distinguishes man from other animals. This sense of duty is bound to affect the idea of the good that is envisaged in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

The individual's life in relation to God has also its own sphere, which may be called communion with God. It includes prayer, remembrance, contemplation, etc. The individual's ideal of life, therefore, beside common morality, must also include its religious aspect. The good consequently ceases to be secular. The experience of God forms an integral, rather the most exalted part, of the good. Communion with God is a moral obligation at the outset, in later stages it becomes devotion and love. Thus morality at its higher level becomes religion.

God is the supreme ideal, and one is required to develop in oneself the attributes of God.⁹ This, however, should not be taken as an absolute maxim. No interpretation of it would be justified which is not in complete harmony with the ideal of 'Abadiyah¹⁰ envisaged in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. Every inference from this maxim should derive its inspiration from the life and teachings of the Prophet. With this condition, the Islamic ideal of the acquisition of Divine attributes bears a different meaning than what the imitatio Dei of the neo-Platonism conveys.

The next important aspect of the ethics of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah is that it provides us with definite principles of morality. The individual has to order his life accordingly. Apparently this is a juristic approach to morality as Prof. Sidgwick may call it.¹¹ But Islamic ethics is far removed from this approach. The business of the individual in Islamic morality is not confined to memorisation of the injunctions of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, and their application to situations with which he is confronted in his life. The principles that they prescribe are very general. For instance, "Allāh enjoineeth justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbiddeth lewdness and abomination and wickedness."¹² In order to implement this principle the first thing that one has to do is to have a clear concept of justice and abomi-

nation (munkar). Though he would receive valuable guidance from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah in this respect yet the necessity for fresh thinking is always there, which increases with the growth of life and the emergence of new situations. Secondly the determination of a particular course of action in a situation is often not a process of strict logical deduction from certain principles. One has to study the situation before him, balance the demands of various principles and assess the consequences of different alternatives before deciding upon any action.

The relevance of consequences in moral judgments is fully borne out by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. For instance, "Let not thy hand be chained to thy neck nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded."¹³ Sometimes the gravity of the expected consequences justifies a strictly prohibited act, for example, the eating of pork to avoid death, or wine to cure a disease otherwise incurable, or making a false statement to save one's life that is unjustifiably intended, or to speak ill of a person in his absence to save others from his wrong deeds,¹⁴ etc.

The right act according to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah is not one which is apparently in harmony with their injunctions. It must also have a good motive behind it. "All acts will be judged according to their motives,"¹⁵ is a famous saying of the Prophet. Only those acts have moral worth which are done to please God. This does not, however, mean that His commands should be followed with complete indifference to consequences—a view that we have just seen is not in accord with the teachings of the Qur'ān. To determine precisely the meaning of the pleasure of God, and its impact on the common motives of moral acts would involve us into the discussion of a number of questions that cannot be taken up here.

With regard to the question of the obligation involved in right actions the Qur'ānic view point has to be worked out. The Ash'arites believed it to be Shara'ī (revelational) while the Mu'tazilites considered it to be rational. These views were deductions from the general metaphysical and epistemological ideas of these schools, not the result of an independent inquiry. Apparently the verses of the Qur'ān lend support to both these views, and probably the correct view would be a synthesis of the two. The Ash'arite point of view hardly needs any quotation from the Qur'ān for its support.¹⁶ In support of the other view one or two verses are cited below: "I swear by the accusing soul" (LXXV, 2). The recognition of the accusing soul, or what we call conscience, affirms

a moral authority in man which not only accuses but also commands and guides. In the same *Surah* further on we find "Oh, but man is a telling witness against himself, although he tenders his excuses" (LXXV, 14-15).

As to the knowledge of the good and right the Qur'ānic view is likewise somewhere between the Ash'arite and the Mu'tazilite views. It is neither exclusively revelational nor rational. In support of the former view again we need not quote from the Qur'ān.¹⁷ In support of the latter the following verse may be cited: "By the soul and its perfection, and its being inspired (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and what is right for it."¹⁸ For the synthesis of both these views, a parable from the Prophet may be narrated.

"There is the right path which leads man to his destination. There are parallel walls on either side of the road, and there are some open doors in both these walls. On the doors there are curtains. From the remote end of the road a person is calling, 'Proceed straight, do not turn to any side.' Whenever a person wishes to lift the curtain from any door, some one calls from above, 'Beware! Don't lift the curtains, otherwise you will be allured inside.' The Prophet explained that this road was the path of Islam, these doors were things and acts prohibited by God, and these curtains were His *ḥudūd* (limits). The voice at the end of the path was the Qur'ān, and the voice from above was God's monitor in the heart of every believer."¹⁹

The responsibility of man for his actions is stressed by the Qur'ān in unequivocal terms. For instance: 'Every soul is a pledge for its own deeds',²⁰ or 'This day is each soul requitted that which it hath earned; no wrong (is done) this day. Lo! Allāh is swift at reckoning.'²¹ This principle has been controverted by people by quoting those verses from the Qur'ān which speak of the omnipotence of God. In this connection, however, two things must be kept in mind. Firstly, the view that the verses of the latter type contradict the former view is at best an inference. Nowhere in the Qur'ān has the responsibility for human actions been attributed to God. Secondly, whenever the responsibility for any undesirable act has been ascribed to God by way of inference from His omnipotence and omniscience, the Qur'ān has denied the validity of this inference, and has condemned it as a product of sheer ignorance and fancy. "They who are idolators will say: Had Allāh willed, we had not ascribed (unto Him) partners, neither had our fathers, nor had we forbidden aught." Thus did those who were before them give the lie (to Allāh's messengers) till they tasted the fear of us,

Say : Have ye any knowledge that ye can adduce for us ? Lo ! ye follow naught but an opinion. Lo ! ye do but guess.”²²

This is in outline the ethical ideal of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, which was perfectly exemplified in the life of the Prophet. He applied the ethical principles of the Qur’ān to all departments of life, individual or social, national or international. The people who went through this experience under his guidance and supervision, developed a keen moral insight, which though not conscious of its theoretical issues, yet served as a good guide for generations to come.

With the rapid expansion of Islam, the Muslim community had to face a number of problems that challenged its moral insight. They were met with most satisfactorily by the jurists of the second and third centuries, who in the course of their work came gradually to be conscious of the theoretical issues involved in their practical insight. A number of other factors combined to enforce the need for understanding these issues. People who had recently entered the fold of Islam, could not easily forget the moral questions that had vexed them so long without getting a satisfactory solution from their new religion. To be sincere in their faith and to mould their life according to it they needed a better comprehension of its ideals and values. Besides, there was the challenge of those sects and religions—Christians, Jews, Magians and others—who in their self-defence were attacking the tenets of Islam. Greek learning and sciences that were being introduced through Arabic translations and commentaries fostered rationalism and enforced the demand for an intelligible explanation of the ethical problems.

The immediate cause, however, which set the train of thinking in motion was political. The Umayyads resorted to inhuman measures and brutal practices in their effort to establish their government. To silence public denunciation, to forestall their objections, and probably to overcome the qualms of their own conscience, they attributed their wild atrocities to the will of God. They used the verses of the Qur’ān and the sayings of the Prophet to emphasise the omnipotence of God and His preordination.²³ They were opposed by a group of people who upheld the responsibility of man and the freedom of the will. Each of these groups, however had to face one difficulty or the other in consistently working out its own views. If man is responsible for his acts, he must have full freedom of willing those acts. But does

this not impose a limit on Divine omnipotence? This was the question which the free-willers had to face. On the other hand, if God's omnipotence was absolute and all actions were caused by His will, then did it not contradict His justice? This was the question that the protagonists of Divine omnipotence had to tackle.

The cause of the freedom of the will was later taken up by the Mu'tazilites, who unscrupulously set a limit to Divine omnipotence. They pronounced their views in words shocking to the religious conscience of their brethren. It was in 912 A.D. that Al-Ash'arī publicly renounced his Mu'tazilite views, and thenceforth started to propagate his own ideas. He was however, preoccupied with theological issues and did not turn to ethical problems.²⁴ It was Abu Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 1012 A.D.) who first enunciated these problems and gave an Ash'arite solution of them. Abū Ishāq al-Isfrā'īnī²⁵ (d. 1027) and others then joined him. They, however, confined themselves to two questions, one relating to the source of ethical knowledge and the other to the basis of moral obligation. About the good or the moral ideal they made no systematic inquiry. No doubt they debated the possibility of the beautiful vision, but they did not discuss it as the moral ideal.²⁶

For the evolution of the moral ideal, we must look to ḡuḡism or philosophy. Under the impact of various factors a new ideal was gradually evolving. The political and social conditions of the third and fourth centuries that we have sketched in the previous chapter, exercised tremendous influence on the development of this ideal. The Qur'ānic ideal of life was delicately balanced comprising everything in a reasonable degree. But under the stress and strain of new conditions its balance was destroyed and a number of tendencies were accentuated at the cost of others. Withdrawal from society was stressed in opposition to active participation in its affairs, asceticism pushed ahead its frontiers, trust in God led to paralysing resignation, a life of intellectual quest for reality or contemplation was preferred to one of action and experience. A doctrine of love of God was formulated urging union with God through perpetual act of remembrance culminating into an ecstatic experience of the Divine Being.

The second factor which promoted this spirit, fostered this ideal, and provided concepts and tools for formulating and expressing it, was the introduction of Greek philosophy into Islamic thought. The Syrian medium through which Greek philosophy passed to Arabic and the Christian translators who mostly transmitted this material, contributed its own share in the development of this ideal.

Some of the cardinal ideas of the Greek philosophy that influenced the growth of the new ideal may be noted here. God in the Greek philosophy did not rise above the position of a metaphysical concept. He was the Primal Cause necessary to set the universe in motion, or the original source from which every being emanated. In neo-Platonism, whose metaphysics dominated the Muslim mind for ages, God was set above reason, purified of all attributes, and made an object of supra-rational contemplation. He was the original source of the human soul and to Him it was destined to return through the intermediation of the Nous. This return to the One was to be effected first by a process of purification from the evil and the material, and then by the contemplation of the Divine. God was never the source of Law, nor the object of devotion or worship in Greek philosophy. He never revealed a system of life to be established on the earth. He was not the dispenser of justice in the life hereafter. The dominant conception of the soul was spiritual. But the gulf between the soul and the body was gradually widened. The body came to be despised. Porphyry attempted suicide to get rid of the great evil—his body, but was thwarted by his master, Plotinus, who taught him to retain it as a training ground for the soul, as a necessary evil.²⁷ Plato and Aristotle were deeply interested in society and its problems; the individual according to them was thoroughly social and his social nature dominated his individuality. This social aspect was also preserved by the Stoics. But in the middle-Platonism and neo-Platonism it gradually faded into a cynical indifference, leading sometimes to apathy and disgust.

Socrates confined knowledge to reason, and made virtue consist in knowledge. These two basic ideas continued with certain modifications throughout the course of Greek philosophy. The stigma that he attached to the senses was never removed. Later on, in neo-Platonism reason was developed into supra-rational intuition. Philosophy thus culminated in a kind of mysticism, and the rational pursuit of reality ended in the ecstatic experience of the One.

Greek ethics was the ethics of the good and not of duty. It had no revealed codes of morality, no sanctified moral authority, and no concept of accountability to God. Its good was always some form of happiness and virtue was a means to that good. Primarily happiness consisted in the all-round development of personality, but in the hands of philosophers it came to be identified with the perfection of reason. Reason was the distinctive characteristic of man. True humanity was identical with it. The life of reason, therefore, was the true ideal.

Reason was practical as well as theoretical. But theoretical reason always ranked higher and practical life was considered subservient to theoretical pursuits. Metaphysics was the highest form of knowledge and its attainment the most exalted element of the human ideal. Virtues were graded on a scale in which intellectual virtues occupied the paramount place. In neo-Platonic ethics they were placed in the order of political, cathartic and intellectual, leading to paradigmatic virtues that consisted in the contemplation of the One.²⁸

Such were the main ideas of the Greek philosophy that exercised a tremendous influence on Muslim thinkers. Their impact, in the conditions prevailing in the third and fourth centuries of Islam, hardly requires any explanation. How actually they influenced the growth of a new moral ideal, and provided ready made tools and concepts for its formulation will be clear by studying the growth of the ideal itself.

This is a rapid sketch of the intellectual background in the early history of Islam. We shall now attempt a more detailed study of the various trends of ethical thought during this period.

THE ETHICAL VIEWS OF THE THEOLOGIANS

Ethical thinking, as noted above, started with the controversy over human responsibility. The first protagonists of the freedom of the will were the Qadarites. Their cause was afterwards taken up by the Mu'tazilites who boldly worked out the implications of this doctrine. If man wills his actions, that is, if he is the real cause (or as they put it, the creator²⁹) of his acts, Divine omnipotence cannot be absolute. Without imposing a limit on God's power, they thought that neither human responsibility nor Divine justice could be maintained.³⁰ Their opponents, the Jabarites (determinists), on the other hand, upholding the absoluteness of Divine omnipotence, denied the reality of human freedom and responsibility, and did not try to justify Divine justice.³¹ Ash'arites propounded the doctrine of acquisition (Kasb) to maintain Divine omnipotence and justice on the one hand and human freedom and responsibility on the other. Man, they said, was not the creator of his actions, he could only choose and will and the rest was from God. Even the power to choose and will, and the act of choosing and willing were created in him by God. Man was responsible for his acts because their choice lay with him. This left room for Divine justice. And since everything was caused by God, His absolute omnipotence also stood vindicated.³²

The question of the reconciliation of Divine justice with God's omnipotence was also involved in the problem of evil. The Mu'tazilites believed that God was bound to requite the sufferings of the innocent in the next world.³³ The Ash'arites were opposed to the imposition of any obligation on God, since that meant to them a limitation of His omnipotence. Consequently they questioned the very idea of justice. Justice, they said, was not what our reason pronounced, but what God did.³⁴ The Mu'tazilites believed that justice was rational, and God's actions were just in the sense in which Reason affirmed. Not only that God's actions were in harmony with reason, but they must be so. The commands of reason were as binding on Him as on any other rational being.

This gave rise to two important ethical questions: What is the source of ethical knowledge, Reason or Shara'? and what is the ground of moral obligation? These problems became very important, since with them were linked a number of other problems, one of which was that of the justification of prophecy. Mu'tazilite rationalism, immature as it was, threatened the very foundations of revelation. If Reason is sufficient for the cognition of good and bad, where is the need for Revelation?³⁵

The Mu'tazilite answer to both the questions of the source of ethical knowledge and moral obligation was Reason. Good (*ḥasan*), they said, was used in three different senses: firstly in the sense in which prayer, fast and other religious duties were good; secondly in the sense of being useful or pleasant, and thirdly in the sense in which justice, gratefulness or generosity were good. They admitted that Revelation was required if the good was used in the first sense.³⁶ But if it was used in the other two senses (which included moral good), they believed that Reason alone was sufficient. It was by Reason that we knew that thankfulness, truthfulness and the like were right (*ḥasan*), and ingratitude, falsehood, etc. were wrong (*qabīḥ*). Shara' did not reveal their goodness but simply confirmed what was already pronounced by Reason. This view was often put like this: Things and acts are good in themselves and their goodness or rightness (*ḥusn*) may be known by Reason.³⁷ This assertion implied that the meaning of the good or bad was completely rational. But the question as to what the good or bad meant was not raised at this stage. It was in the following century that al-Ghazālī first clearly asked this question.³⁸ The Mu'tazilites also believed that Reason was the source of moral obligation. It not only informed what was good, but also commanded it.

Moral obligation was rational, and commands of Reason were binding on every rational being. Consequently, for them, even before the Shara' reached us, we were responsible for our actions.³⁹

The arguments of the Mu'tazilites for the self-sufficiency of Reason in ethics were as follows: The goodness (ḥusn) of moral virtues, e.g. thankfulness, we necessarily know. Human beings, whether believing in any revelation or not, universally recognise their goodness. Whenever a purpose is equally served by a good or a bad act, one feels that it is his obligation to do the good act. Were the goodness of acts unknowable by Reason, we should never be able to distinguish between a true prophet and an impostor. The obligation for the Shari'ah, too, therefore lies ultimately in Reason.⁴⁰

The Ash'arites recognised the good as rational only in the second sense.⁴¹ The knowledge of the two other categories of the good, the religious and the moral (between which they made no distinction), depended on revelation. Their goodness did not consist in any quality inherent in them. They were good because Shara' enjoined them. Shara', in other words, not only created in us the awareness of the good but made things good. From this view it followed that the moral obligation could not be rational, and that before the command of Shara' reached us there could arise no question of obligation for moral acts.

Al-Bāqillānī (1012 A.D.) found little difficulty in refuting the Mu'tazilite arguments. Knowledge of the good, he said, was neither obvious nor universal, since so many men held the contrary belief, and believed in the goods that were contradictory. Ethical knowledge was not rationally necessary, for it could not be deduced from any self-evident principles. That people felt obligation for preferring good to a bad act when both equally served the purpose, was either due to their fear of social disapproval or to the expectation of praise, or because they had faith in some revelation or might be under its influence. Al-Bāqillānī did not see any other possibility. As to the last argument, he believed that the only sure test of a true prophet lay in his ability to perform miracles.⁴²

Between the Ash'arites and the Mu'tazilites, stood the school of Abū Ḥanīfah and his interpreter Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 934 A.D.). In the matter of ethical knowledge they were with the Mu'tazilites, but in the conception of moral obligation they sided with

the Ash'arites.⁴³ They did not recognise any necessary connection between these two problems.

THE ETHICS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

When we pass from theological to philosophical ethics, not only do the problems of ethics change, but also their terminology. The theologians used 'ḥasan' for the good and right (between which they hardly made any distinction), 'qabīḥ' for the evil and wrong, and wujūb to convey the sense of obligation. In philosophical ethics these terms were replaced by Khair (good), Faḍīlah (virtue), Sa'ādah (happiness), and their opposites. The central problem of philosophical ethics was that of the good. It began with a definition of character (Khulq), which was the object of moral judgment. Character was good or bad ; and its goodness or badness was the result of the mutual action of the faculties of the soul. Virtue lay in good character, but was also used for every excellence of mind that was relatively permanent. Sa'ādah consisted in virtuous activity, and comprised all kinds of the good. But the highest type of Sa'ādah was that which a philosopher enjoyed, that is, which consisted in the unimpeded activity of reason, particularly the theoretical. This was the general pattern of philosophical ethics in Islam.

Al-Kindi (d. 260 A.H./873 A.D.) Beginning as a Mu'tazilite thinker al-Kindi soon broke away from theology, and devoted himself to the intensive study, exposition and translation of Greek works. His interest was mainly directed to the problems of metaphysics and psychology. On ethics he wrote a small treatise, "*Dafa' al-Aḥzān*" (Removal of Grief) that deals with practical measures for removing or avoiding grief and remorse. Miskawaih made use of this book in his practical ethics. For theoretical ethics al-Kindi's doctrine of the soul (as set forth in his Essay on the Soul) is of great importance, since the basic conception here expounded served as the foundation of subsequent psychology as well as ethics. It ran as follows :

The soul is a spiritual substance, pure and simple. It is divine in its essence and has emanated from God as a ray of light emanates from the sun.⁴⁴ Its essential difference from the material body is proved by the fact that it always puts checks and restraints on the desires of the body.⁴⁵ As a result of the contact with the body in this world, which is essentially evil and dark, the soul is influenced by the

appetites and the passions of the body. Consequently we have, besides the rational, the appetitive and the passionate souls. They can be compared to a king, a pig and a dog.⁴⁶ Man is virtuous when reason, the king, exercises full control over the other two. His perfection, however, consists in pure activity of thought, whose highest object is God. But knowledge of God can only be attained by a pious soul.⁴⁷ Morality is a necessary condition of and a means to philosophy. The highest point of perfection cannot be attained unless the soul leaves the body, and returns to the world of spiritual realities. There it will have the vision of God,⁴⁸ the acme of perfection. All things will be transparent to the soul as clearly as they are to God.⁴⁹ And this highest experience will be accompanied by the greatest spiritual pleasure.⁵⁰

In his *Dafa' al-Aḥzān*,⁵¹ he points out that the root cause of all grief and suffering is that men love things and thirst for objects that are worldly. But whatever is worldly is subject to decay and disintegration. If instead they long for the eternal, real and spiritual, they will not have any cause for grief.⁵¹ In this consists the true life of a happy man. Death is a source of perpetual grief and anxiety so long as its reality is unknown. If once it is realised that death is the gateway to the eternal life of abiding happiness, it ceases to be a cause of grief.⁵²

Al-Farabi (d. 339/950) was primarily a logician. Besides logic his best powers were devoted to metaphysics; politics was his next important interest. He wrote a commentary on Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle, but left no book of his own on the subject. His ethical views can either be gathered from his political writings—*Al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, *Al-Siyāsāt Al-Madaniyah*, *Taḥṣīl al-Sa'ādah* and *Fuṣūl al-Madani*, or derived from his *Al-Tanbīh 'alā Sabīl al-Sa'ādah*. In all these writings except *Al-Tanbīh* the object is the same, viz., the realisation of *Sa'ādah* in the state. *Al-Tanbīh*, on the other hand, is particularly concerned with the individual *Sa'ādah*, and may be well considered as an ethical supplement to his political writings.

Al-Kindī's conception of the soul is neo-Platonic. But al-Fārābī starts as an Aristotelian. He regards the soul as the form of which body is the matter. In its turn it is the matter of which 'aql (intelligence, spirit or nous) is the form. As the soul gives completeness to the body, similarly intelligence gives perfection to the soul. There is,

however, an important difference. While the soul is a development from the body, intelligence comes from the Active Intellect.⁵³ But in his later writings al-Fārābī abandons this conception, and adopts the neo-Platonic view that the soul is a spiritual substance, absolutely different from the body.⁵⁴ Whatever may be al-Fārābī's real view, it is clear, that after death, intelligence returns whence it came. Again, how does the intelligence continue a life of its own after death, is not clear.

There is another difference. Al-Kindī, following Plato, distinguishes three faculties of the soul : the appetitive, the passionate and the rational. But Al-Fārābī generally distinguishes the functions of the soul as nutritive, sensitive, imaginative and rational.⁵⁵ Allied to these four powers, there is the appetitive (*al-nazū'īyah*) which is the source of willing any good or beautiful object whether perceptual, imaginative or ideal.⁵⁶ All of them are related to each other as matter to form, the nutritive being the first matter and reason the final form. The appetitive is related to the rest as heat is to fire.⁵⁷ All the powers of the soul, therefore, are arranged in an organic hierarchy of which reason is the supreme ruler. It is the final cause to which all the powers of the body and the soul owe their existence, the ultimate form in which lies their completion, and the end for which man has been created.⁵⁸ The highest good of man or his *Sa'ādah*, therefore lies in the perfection of reason.

Reason is of two kinds, theoretical and practical. The perfection of theoretical reason lies in knowing the existent, which amounts to the attainment of almost all true sciences. The ultimate end of knowledge is the comprehension of God,⁵⁹ that He is one, immovable, the primeval cause of all, the organiser of the whole universe through His beneficence, wisdom and justice.⁶⁰ Metaphysics and theology form the crown of knowledge. The perfection of practical reason consists in distinguishing between the right and the wrong, and ordering life accordingly, in knowing the beautiful and the ugly, and in creation and construction. Practical reason is, however, not an end in itself, it is subservient to theoretical reason.⁶¹ Morality and art are handmaids to philosophy.

True happiness, says al-Fārābī, is a state of the soul in which it exists free from matter and tends towards pure substances entirely free from corporeality.⁶² God, the Form of forms, is the highest object of philosophy. To become in one's action like God is the goal of the philosopher. This *imitatio Dei* constitutes the highest perfection and

the ultimate happiness.⁶³

The way to attain this end is first to purify the soul and to cultivate virtue. Virtue consists in the proper functioning of the powers of the soul under the guidance of reason. On the analogy of the body al-Fārābī finds the criterion of the proper functioning in the health of the soul, which consists in harmonious working of its parts.⁶⁴ Virtue consists in harmony and moderation, in striking the mean in each activity. The mean, however, is not something absolute. It is relative to time, place and the conditions of life of the individual and the community.⁶⁵

In the detailed treatment of virtues, al-Fārābī follows the method of Aristotle. He takes them one by one and analyzes and discusses them without deriving them in Platonic manner from the three faculties of the soul.⁶⁶

After purifying the soul and embellishing it with virtues one should turn towards perfecting the theoretical reason. The first step here is to acquire the science of argumentation (*ʿIlm al-Burhān*) so that one may avoid pitfalls in his intellectual pursuits. This science of argumentation has two parts, the mathematical and the logical. One should begin with mathematics and then take up the study of logic. Then he should devote himself to the study of different sciences and finally take up theology, the crown of all sciences.⁶⁷

The achievement of *Saʿādah* is not possible in isolation. Perfection can only be attained in cooperation with others in a state.⁶⁸ "The ideal state," al-Fārābī defines, "is one whose citizens cooperate with one another in obtaining all those means and objects through which true happiness is attained."⁶⁹ Al-Fārābī maintains that cooperation is necessary because of the divergence of abilities in human beings, the majority of whom are incapable of knowing true happiness and achieving it individually.⁷⁰ But the intellectual minority in the state is not fully competent to guide the masses. A supreme ruler is the greatest need of the state.⁷¹ This supreme ruler is either a philosopher, a prophet or an *imām*.⁷² In case he is not available, the law laid down by him should be obeyed. The state envisaged by al-Fārābī is a religious community as well, and its head is at once the temporal king and the highest religious potentate. Not only do the conditions existing in the state determine the temporal lot of its citizens, but also their future destiny.⁷³

The Brethren of Sincerity started with the professed aim of purifying the Islamic *Shariʿah*, which according to them had been defiled by

superstition and polluted by ignorance. They held the view that there was no way of cleansing and purifying it except through philosophy. 'When the prophetic Sharfah is combined with Greek philosophy perfection is attained.'⁷¹ But a deeper study of their tracts reveals that this profession was a mask under whose protection they could pursue their ulterior ends. They were not loyal to any religion, nor bound to any system of thought. Taking different elements from diverse sources, they evolved an eclectic system of their own, which was not often consistent.⁷⁵

Their ethics was also eclectic. It was a science of character, which might be good or bad. Men differed widely in their character, because of the differences in the composition of their body, in the climatic conditions in their habitats, and in their training and education. But the most decisive factor was the influence of the stars. 'It is the root cause,' they say, 'and every thing else is dependent on it.'⁷⁶ This was a new element introduced by them in the conception of character, most probably under Persian and Indian influences.

Character was inborn as well as acquired. Most people were evil by nature, and could be rarely reformed. Only a few were good. This, however, went against their belief that man as created was essentially good.⁷⁷

Character was the state of the soul, in which they distinguished five powers : the vegetative appetitive soul, the animal passionate soul, the human rational soul, the philosophic intellectual soul and the prophetic angelic soul.⁷⁸ This was a queer blend of Aristotelianism and Platonism, with the addition of two more powers which were derived from their basic thesis that man was a microcosm and as such reflected every power of the macrocosm, the Great Man.⁷⁹ All these powers were graded in a hierarchy. The common reason was set above the powers of the body, and over it was installed the philosophic reason which in turn was subjected to the authority of revelation (Nāmās). The performance of every power of the soul was good if it followed the dictates of its higher authority. This countenanced to the Ash'arite view that the good and the bad were revelational. This was, however, not the case. 'Not all persons,' they believed, 'but only some of them are capable of distinguishing what is good and bad, and realise their obligation in respect of what is good.'⁸⁰

The highest good or Sa'ādah lay in virtue, which consisted in the proper functioning of the powers of the soul. Virtue was the mean between extremes, and was a kind of Divine grace, or the reflection of

His light through the intercession of the neo-Platonic hypostases, the World Intellect and the World Soul.⁸¹

Individual souls were parts of the World Soul, and like it inhabited the material body, which was basically evil. Entry into it meant parting with peace and happiness for ever.⁸² The reason to justify this contact lay in the preparation of the soul for the eternal bliss to come. The body was the necessary training ground for the individual soul, as the physical universe was for the World Soul.⁸³ The soul was placed in the body in order that it might reach its perfection with its own effort, and might develop from potentiality to actuality the wisdom, arts and virtues inherent in it.⁸⁴ The perfection of the soul consisted in learning moral virtues and right beliefs, comprehending truth and reality, and acquiring the knowledge of government and politics.⁸⁵ Their ideal man was 'a Persian by birth, an Arab by religion, a Ḥanīf (sincere) in attitude, a Mesopotamian in culture, a Hebrew in astuteness, a Christian in manners, a Syrian in asceticism, a Greek in sciences, an Indian in thought, a sufi in life, angelic in morals, godly in views and divine in knowledge.'⁸⁶ He combined in himself Socrates' knowledge, Christ's asceticism and mysticism, and a Muslim's devotion to religion.⁸⁷ This devotion, however, was not to any particular regulations and forms of religion, but to its essence, which according to them consisted in sincere friendship, right behaviour, comprehension of sciences, purification of the soul, and pursuit of spiritual realities.⁸⁸ Forms of worship were not ends in themselves. They were symbols standing for esoteric truths. Salvation in the next life did not depend on prayers and virtues, but on the acquisition of knowledge and truth.⁸⁹ The code of conduct that they prescribed for their highest devotees did not include religious duties at all. In fact they detested religion and believed in the superiority of philosophy over religion.⁹⁰ Al-Maḡdisī says, "The Sharī'ah is the remedy for the sick, but philosophy is the tonic for the healthy."⁹¹

The highest life of the soul was free from all contamination of the body, which, however, was possible only in the next life. After death the soul of the philosopher rose to a fuller life of spirit in the company of the spiritual beings, contemplating the World Intellect and God, and enjoying the highest spiritual happiness.⁹² They ridiculed the common conceptions of Paradise, Hell, Resurrection etc., and attributed them to sheer ignorance.⁹³

Their ideal was to form a spiritual community based on sincere love and perfect co-operation. Its rules were not disclosed to every one except the devotees in the innermost circle. "When we have agreed

upon the above mentioned rules of the sincere brotherhood," they say, "we must pool all the powers of our bodies, consolidate them into a single power, integrate the life of our souls into a single organisation, and thus build the Ideal Spiritual City."⁹⁴

THE ETHICAL IDEAL OF THE SUFIS

Ṣūfism entered upon its third⁹⁵ phase of development in the 4th A.H./10th A.D. century—a phase of systematisation and construction. The third century produced original thinkers and creative minds whose doctrines and practices formed the basis of ṣūfism. They, however, did not develop ṣūfism into a coherent system. The task of systematising their views, elaborating their doctrines, explaining their allusions, and above all reconciling their opinions with Islam in its original form was excellently executed by the great ṣūfīs of the fourth century. They also preserved the lives of their great masters and collected their teachings.

Since the execution of al-Ḥallāj in 309 A.H./922 A.D. the necessity of defending ṣūfism and substantiating its conformity with the Qur'ān and the Sunnah assumed great urgency and importance. In theological matters, it was shown that the ṣūfīs did not deviate an inch from the views of the recognised theologians of the age. Rejecting, like the Ash'arites, the Mu'tazilite doctrine of the greatest advantage on the same grounds, the ṣūfīs affirmed the arbitrariness of Divine action. It was not necessary that His actions be to the advantage of human beings.⁹⁶ In fact nothing was incumbent on God. He might punish the righteous and reward the wicked. To try to discover reason behind God's actions was wrong. He did not do things for any reason. In proof of this position verses were cited from the Qur'ān like "I will surely fill hell with jinn and mankind together" (XI, 119), or "We have created for hell many of the jinn or mankind" (VII, 197).⁹⁷

Naught of this, 'al-Kalābādhī (d. 1000 A.D.) writes, 'is unjust or wrong. For injustice is a thing forbidden, and really consists in putting a thing out of its place ; while wrong is a swerving from the path that has been laid, and (from) the ideal which has been set up by him who is above, and beneath whose power all men are. Since God is not under the power of any person, and since He has no commander or chider above Him, He cannot be unjust in what He does, wrong in aught that He decrees. There is nothing foul in Him ; for foul is what He has made foul, and fair is what He has commanded.'⁹⁸

This was in complete conformity with the dominant theological views.

But just after this passage al-Kalābādhī gives another version of the fair and foul which clearly reflects his mystic orientation, and reveals the true mind of a ṣūfī. He quotes Muḥammad b. Mūsā's definition of the fair and foul thus : "Fair-seeming things are fair through His revelation, and foul-seeming things foul through His veiling, these are two attributes which persist in post-eternity as they existed in pre-eternity." Explaining this al-Kalābādhī says : "This means that what restores thee to God from things is fair, and what restores thee to things and not to Him is foul, so that foul and fair are things whose nature God has prescribed in pre-eternity."⁹⁹ The clinging of the heart to God, and living a life of absorption in Him was the ideal that the ṣūfī set before him. This was the supreme good, and every thing that seemed fair or foul was judged by this standard.

The systematic treatment of the ideal that was the characteristic of the philosophers was not found in the ṣūfīs. We shall, however, attempt to present the main features of their ideal and compare it with that of the philosophers.

The human soul for the ṣūfī, as for the neo-Platonic al-Kindī, was an emanation from God. The intermediate series in neo-Platonism, however, were replaced by another order. But the relation of the soul with God became more intimate and direct. Already in neo-Platonism the supremacy of the Aristotelian reason had yielded to a supra-rational conception of the highest intuitive experience, namely ecstasy—a conception that was equally cherished by al-Kindī and the Brethren of Sincerity. Muslim theologians, on the other hand, by denying the rationality of Divine action had in fact shown that God could not be known through reason. The ground was thus prepared, and the ṣūfīs in the light of their own experience clearly voiced the inadequacy of reason in divine matters. "The intellect," they said, "goes about creation (Kaun), but when it beholds the Creator (Mukawwin) it dissolves."¹⁰⁰ The theological view was negative, because it only concluded the inadequacy of reason. But the ṣūfīs went a step further in the positive affirmation of another way to the direct experience of God—the way of intuition, love and ecstasy. By their emphasis on love they infused a new spirit into religion, and gave that warmth and enthusiasm to the observation of Law that was so badly needed. It was this intense love, ardent devotion and passionate quest for the Divine that distinguished the ṣūfī ideal from the cold intellectual approach of the

philosopher, whose reason inspite of being emancipated, could not rise to the level of passion.

The ṣūfī conception of the highest good or Saʿādah was similar to that of the philosopher. Writing in the following century al-Ghazālī defined Saʿādah as the perfection of the soul.¹⁰¹ Adopting the same Platonic idea of function as a basis, he argued that the perfection of the soul lay in the comprehension of intelligibles, in reflecting and mirroring the truth of divine realities and in uniting with them almost in complete union.¹⁰² This ideal was attained by knowledge and action. So far as action was concerned, both the philosophers and the ṣūfīs agreed that its purpose was to purge the soul of vice, and purify it of evil qualities.¹⁰³ Morality was essentially purification. They differed only in respect of knowledge.¹⁰⁴ The ṣūfīs were not concerned with learning and sciences, nor interested in the intellectual pursuit of reality. Their method consisted in the annihilation of vice, severance of ties, and then concentrating their whole energy on waiting for the Divine light to illumine for them the truth and reality.¹⁰⁵ "The gist of their knowledge," writes al-Ghazālī, "is to mortify the self and acquire freedom from baser passions and evil attributes, so that the heart may get rid of the thought of aught save God and embellish it with Divine remembrance."¹⁰⁶ With the polished mirror of their heart, the ṣūfīs waited, longed and craved for the reflection of Divine realities. They substituted renunciation of the world, abstinence from its pleasures, and perpetual remembrance of God for the learning and culture of the philosophers.

Although the purpose of action and virtue for the ṣūfī was the same as for the philosopher, yet they widely differed in the details of action. Broadly the difference lay in two respects, one in the field or scope of action, and the other in its methods. For the philosopher virtue was essentially social, an enterprise not to be pursued in seclusion. They also took greater interest in society, and discussed its problems in their writings. According to them progress in virtue did not stop at individual purification, but inevitably led to the reform of family as the next higher stage culminating in the organisation of society at large. Saʿādah was a common pursuit. The ṣūfīs, on the other hand, were individualists and isolationists. They were not interested in the problems of society or in the measures of its reform. Their highest good was a personal attainment, and the renunciation of social life was a necessary condition for achieving that end.

The philosophers believed in intellectual excellences and placed

them above moral virtues. The mystics did not attach any importance to intellectual culture, rather they developed a sort of antipathy towards scientific and philosophical pursuits. In its place they substituted a hierarchy of other virtues that were directly derived from the basic tenets of the Islamic faith. Sincerity (Ikhlaṣ), conviction (Yaqīn), fear, love, hope and trust in God, and other similar virtues¹⁰⁷ that the ṣūfīs derived from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah were quite foreign to philosophic ethics.

The ṣūfīs gave a new orientation to a number of common virtues. The basic setting of the mystic psychological life was quite different from that of the philosophers. In their consciousness the most immediate and overwhelming factor was God. Their vision of objects, their understanding of life and their conception of common virtues were greatly influenced by this fact. To give but one instance, al-Ḥayā' (bashfulness) was defined by al-Junaid¹⁰⁸ (d. 910 A.D.) as the feeling which arose from the consciousness of God's gifts, on the one hand, and of one's failure to render unto Him what was due, on the other.¹⁰⁹

In the pursuit of virtue the divergence between their views became very conspicuous. A profound sense of duty, an earnest craving for God's pleasure, a terrifying consciousness of sin, and an intense love of the Divine distinguished the mystic's struggle for the purification of the soul from the philosopher's pursuit of virtue. The latter's consciousness of the Divine was feeble. It was only an intellectual ideal and failed to stir the deep underlying elements of human personality. For him virtue was an end in itself, and could be well pursued without a very deep consciousness of the Divine. For the ṣūfī, moreover, a life of virtue had far greater importance than was the case with the philosopher. His turning away from intellectual pursuits, and exclusive reliance on the purification of the soul for the highest experience led him to greater devotion to virtue. Consequently we have a fuller and deeper analysis of particular virtues and vices, and an elaborate discussion of their offshoots and ramifications in their works. This is particularly evident in the books of Al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī¹¹⁰ (d. 857 A.D.), Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī¹¹¹ (d. 996 A.D.) and of al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 A.D.) later on. On the contrary, philosophic literature on the subject is far inferior in analysis and elaboration.

The basic inspiration for the ṣūfī ideal lay in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. It, however, differed in details. In some respects it showed a contraction of the original ideal, in others its expansion. Some tendencies were accentuated and intensified, others were weakened and

curtailed, some concepts were given a quite new meaning and significance, some were lost sight of and others were given undue prominence. All this occurred in the development of the *ṣūfī* ideal. The limited compass of this study makes the elaboration of these points impossible. However, to illustrate some of them I shall draw attention to only a few relevant facts.

Originally in Islam the conception of the right action was very wide. In *ṣūfism* its scope became more limited. Social problems, for instance, went out of its purview. There was a harmonious blend of thought, feeling and action in the original ideal, but the *ṣūfīs* laid the emphasis mostly on feeling, thus minimising the importance of other elements. Love of God, for example, was the essence of religion. But the love of God in the original ideal was a spirit pervading all diverse activities that man as the bondman of God and His vicegerent on the earth had to perform. The relation between love and action was more integral and organic. With the *ṣūfīs*, not only the circle of action contracted, but the relation of love with action became loose. Consequently, we find the *ṣūfīs* inventing measures like *Samaʿ* to foster and intensify love without at the same time producing those actions which embodied love in the early period of the history of Islam,

The tendency towards asceticism that was curbed by the Prophet, was promoted by *ṣūfism*. In the pioneers of *ṣūfism* we often find almost a strongly negative attitude towards the pleasures of the body, and social relationship.

In the *Qurʾān* and the *Sunnah* the remembrance of God (*dhikr*) occupied a very important place in the purification of the soul. But there were other factors also, as for instance, *jehād*.¹¹² The *ṣūfīs*, however, came mostly to rely on remembrance, and consequently they developed many new techniques in this field.

The *ṣūfī* conception of *Mujāhadah* was a struggle against one's evil desires, it had nothing to do with battle against the enemies of God. The aspect of steadfastness in wars and of fortitude in the face of hostile elements, which was very prominent in the *Qurʾānic* conception of *Ṣabr*¹¹³ (patience) was almost neglected in its *ṣūfī* conception. The same was the case with *Twakkul*¹¹⁴ (trust) in God. The manifestations of these and similar theological virtues were different in *ṣūfism* from those in the *Qurʾān* and the *Sunnah*.

This change in the ideal raised the question of justification. Whether it was wrong, right or permissible is a quite different problem which is not our business to discuss. It was, however, a problem which

became very serious after the execution of Al-Ḥallāj. The ṣūfīs rose up to the occasion and offered a good defence. I shall draw attention to a point in this defence that will support the above observations.

The ṣūfīs adopted the method of selection to prove their case. They discovered the companions of the Prophet who came nearer their ideal, or found such instances in the life of other companions and prophets as illustrated their ideas. Al-Junaid was asked : What is ṣūfism. He replied, "Ṣūfism is founded on eight qualities exemplified in eight apostles: the generosity of Abrahām, the acquiescence of Ismā'il, the patience of Job, the symbolism of Zakariya, the strangerhood of John, the pilgrimhood of Jesus, the wearing of wool by Moses, and the poverty of Muḥammad."¹¹⁵ Al-Kalābādhī (d. 1000 A.D.) found in the life of the Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah a perfect model for the ṣūfīs.¹¹⁶ So did 'Alī Hujwīrī (d. 1072 A.D.) in the following century. From the life of the first four Caliphs Hujwīrī only mentions their abstinence, sacrifice and generosity.¹¹⁷ He forgets their efforts to build society, to establish a state, to enforce the laws of Allāh, to wage wars and a number of other social, political and economic activities.

Metaphysical Foundations of Miskawaih's Ethics

MISKAWAIH's ethics is rooted in his metaphysics. Many of his ethical ideas are simple deductions from his views regarding God, the universe and the human soul. His *Tahdhīb* opens with a discussion on the nature and function of the soul that provides the psychological basis for an elaborate treatment of character, virtue and happiness. The theory of evolution that is elucidated later in the treatise is another cardinal conception of his philosophy that is so helpful in determining the values of different elements constituting human happiness. It gives a scale of values. But neither the idea of evolution nor the doctrine of the soul can be fully comprehended unless they are viewed in the broader perspective of his metaphysics. Besides, some of the ideas underlying his metaphysics, and notions implicit in his theory of knowledge which have not been explicitly expressed even in *al-Fauz*, have been assumed throughout the *Tahdhīb*. Their role in the basic articulation of his ethics is no less effective.

The ideas informing Miskawaih's metaphysics are neo-Platonic, wrongly believed to be Aristotelian. But he is very earnest in adapting them to Islamic beliefs. In the process of adaptation many of the neo-Platonic ideas have lost some of their significance, and have been used with a slightly different meaning. A few of them have been drastically revised. But the underlying principles of neo-Platonic philosophy have survived without the least modification. Their implications both for Miskawaih's metaphysics and ethics are far-reaching. On the other hand, some of the basic concepts of Islam have been given a new orientation, while others have received quite a different interpretation. Their importance in the evolution of Islamic philosophy and ethics can hardly be over-estimated.

In ethics the major source drawn upon by Miskawaih is Aristotle. He is particularly fond of the latter's doctrine of the mean, his idea of happiness, his view of morality as a social enterprise, and his conception of justice. As an integrated system, Aristotle's ethics is based on his psychology, which is not quite the same as that of neo-Platonism. The

reconciliation of Aristotelian ethics with neo-Platonic psychology is, therefore, another problem that Miskawaih had to face. And here too, as we shall see in detail, his effort has been to bring his finished product in conformity with Islamic ideals. The Platonic and Aristotelian concepts have been employed in the study of Islamic morality, which itself has taken a new form in this process.

Miskawaih made an extensive study of Greek literature. By his time the transmission of Greek philosophical works was almost complete. The Jacobites were the last to take up this work. Yaḥyā b. 'Adī (d. 364 A.H./ 974 A.D.) was a famous Jacobite translator with whom Miskawaih had very friendly relations. The whole of Aristotle's *Organon* had been translated into Arabic, and in this were included his *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, as well as Porphyry's *Isagoge*.¹ Miskawaih mentions all these books in *Al-Sa'ādah*.² Most of Aristotle's works on natural science, psychology and ethics were also available in Arabic. *Magna Moralia* with Theophrastus' commentary; Plato's *Timeaus*, *Republic* and *Laws*; Alexander of Aphrodisias' commentary on the *Categories*, and of Simplicius on *De Anima* were also available.³

Besides, there are reasons for assuming that Miskawaih made use of the Syriac translations of Greek literature which had not yet been translated into Arabic. At a place in *Al-Sa'ādah* he quotes from a book in Syriac on Aristotle's logic that was written for Naushīrwān.⁴ Moreover, Al-Khwānsārī informs that Miskawaih was acquainted with some old languages.⁵ Most probably Syriac was one of them. His close relations with Yaḥyā b. 'Adī and Ibn al-Khammār, the Christian philosopher, lend support to this idea. Ibn al-Khammār wrote a book on the harmony between Christianity and philosophy and a commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima*. Of the latter we find a reference in Al-Fauz al-Aṣghar (Eng. Tr. Sweetman, p. 130). Another source of Miskawaih's knowledge of the Syriac literature must have been his contacts and discussions with Christian and Jewish scholars, of whom quite a considerable number resided in Baghdād. The discussions of Abū Sulaimān's Circle must have been no less informative and illuminating for Miskawaih who was one of its active participants. Almost all Greek philosophical literature was available in Syriac. Most of Aristotle's works and Plato's dialogues with important commentaries had been translated into Syriac. Among the well-known commentaries were that of Proclus on Plato's *Phaedo*, *Gorgias*, part of the *Republic* and *Timeaus*; of Olympiodorus on the *Sophists* and *De Anima*; of Nicolus and Simplicius on Aristotle's *Physics*, *De Anima*, *Categories*

and De Colo et Mundi ; of Thimistius and Alexander of Aphrodisius on De Anima ; and of Porphyry on the Prior Analytics, Categories and Ethics.⁶

Two neo-Platonic works, that were most popular in Arabic, exercised paramount influence on Muslim thought. One was the Theology of Aristotle, which was really the work of an unknown neo-Platonic writer of the sixth century, who collected excerpts from Plotinus' Enneads and Porphyry's Isagoge and publicised them as the last word of Aristotelianism. The second was Proclus' Elements of Theology which, in the style of Euclid, discussed the famous triad of the One, the Intelligence and the Soul.

GOD

Miskawaih's *Al-Fauz* opens with the proof for the existence of a Maker (Sāne'). It is based on the idea of motion, and is basically same as given by Aristotle in the eighth book of his Physics. It is not necessary to reproduce it here. The idea of an unmoved Mover implies that He must be Incorporeal, Eternal and Necessary. His unity has also been deduced from this argument. Suppose that there are more than one Mover. In that case they must resemble in some respects and differ in others. Each of them, therefore, would be a composite being, embodying both similarities and differences. But composition is a movement, so they must possess movement and thereby cease to be Prime Movers. Therefore the Mover is one.⁷

As a consequence of this argument it follows that God is simple, indivisible and indeterminate, since every determination would be contrary to His absolute unity. He is above all description. God, says Miskawaih, cannot be described in positive terms. The absolute unity of His Being defies all definition, since every definition requires prior premises which in the case of the One cannot be formed. We can only speak of him in negative terms.⁸

Can we say that God exists ? In the ordinary sense of the term we must not attribute existence to Him. God is beyond existence, He is the Essence. But though He does not exist in that sense, yet He is the supreme Existence. He not only exists, but also possesses all positive attributes of perfection. The language of negation is only meant for stressing His extreme transcendence, it does not imply the annihilation of any attribute. All expressions used for describing this ineffable Being are approximations. 'If we say that He is so we are



compelled to add that He is not completely so, but better than that. He is Knowing but not like any one who knows, He is Powerful but not like any other who has power and so on.⁹

The nature of Divine knowledge has not been expounded by Miskawaih. But his view of it can be negatively inferred. That it is higher than discursive reason is obvious, since even the philosophers and prophets go beyond this level. It is above the intuitive perception of the Intelligence also, since the cause is always higher than the effect. The Divine Thought, therefore, would be an immediate comprehension, transcending even the duality of thought and being that is essential to the Intelligence.

About the Divine will, too, Miskawaih makes no observation but the logic of the system requires that God should be placed beyond will also, since will implies a desire for something not yet present. However, we may ascribe a higher kind of will to Him, which is not different from necessity. God is all will and all necessity. He is will because He is subject to no necessity, and necessity because nothing is arbitrary in Him. But deeper reflection reveals that in Miskawaih's conception of God the aspect of will is almost overshadowed by thought. This becomes all the more evident when we contrast his view of God with that of the contemporary theologians or the mystics who exalt the Divine will above reason and thought. For the philosopher God is primarily of the nature of thought, and for the theologian or the mystic He is of the nature of will.

From the viewpoint of religion the most important question for a philosopher like Miskawaih is not whether God thinks or wills, but whether He can be the object of worship or prayer without losing His absolute unity. He has been exalted above all particulars and universals, above the soul and intelligence, even above thought and being. He is said to possess all attributes, though we know that strictly speaking He does not. How can we worship a privative, or contemplate an absolute unity, or pray to a transcendental. Religion requires a personal God replete with attributes, a Providence looking after every particular, great or small, a Will to be obeyed, a Being to be feared and loved. We need not dilate further upon the differences between the philosophic and religious approaches to God.

God is the First Being. He is self-caused, and everything else is caused by Him. He is the creator of all that exists. He is the sustainer and mover and the ultimate cause of all life and motion. His causality, however, should not be understood in a mechanistic way. He moves

everything as the object of its desire. Everything has a desire to approach it, and this desire is its life, the urge for self-completion and self-transcendence. As the object of desire He is the end of all. End and cause are one with Him. He is the source of all existence as well as its ultimate goal, the efficient and the final cause. And what is the ultimate object of desire is the good. God is the First Good.¹⁰ All Goodness flows from Him, He is the source not only of existence but of goodness also. Everything comes from Him and returns to Him. Miskawaih does not speak of Him as the Beautiful, but he would not deny that all beauty comes from Him. However, the absence of any positive statement on this point is not without consequence. Plato conceives the Good as the Beautiful also ; the former is the object of desire while the latter is the object of love. In Miskawaih on the other hand, since the Beautiful does not figure as the Good does, the aspect of love does not become prominent. Thus his treatment of the love of God is deficient.

Miskawaih's view of the universe is that it is the creation of God. He mostly uses the term creation, although he does not completely avoid the use of affluence (*faidān*),¹¹ or procession (*ṣudūr*).¹² Every being, he says, is the creation of God, not excepting the Intelligence or the Soul. He further believes that creation is *ex nihilo*. The proof for this doctrine that he, drawing upon Alexander of Aphrodisius,¹³ expounds, runs like this.

Every change is a change of form. The material substratum continues throughout. But when a new form replaces the old one the latter may exist side by side with the former, or pass away into another body, or go out of existence. The first alternative is not possible, since two opposite forms cannot be present in one body simultaneously ; the second is also ruled out, since as accidental to its body the form cannot by itself pass on into another body. Hence we are left with the third alternative, namely that the old form goes out of existence. Similarly it can be proved that the new form comes out of non-existence. But as form is never without matter, both form and matter must come out of non-existence. The creation is *ex nihilo*.¹⁴

It may be observed that the argument, if it is sound, holds only for the world of matter. It does not touch spiritual beings. To this objection, however, Miskawaih might reply that there is a sort of incorporeal matter which is the substratum of spiritual beings, and is the cause of their imperfection and unreality, to the extent to which the spiritual beings are unreal and imperfect as compared to God, the most

Real and the most Perfect. They are not above the category of form and matter and hence not beyond the above argument. But this is not the end of the difficulty. Creation has meaning only when it is in time. But at least the Intelligence and the soul are above time,¹⁵ since being the measure of motion time is the creation of the Soul.¹⁶ Thus the Intelligence and the Soul cannot be said to have been created. They are eternal, not in the sense of being everlasting in time, but in the sense of being timeless, existing in pure duration. Now if the Intelligence and the soul are created entities, we must understand that this is an eternal creation, the Creator has only a logical priority over the creation. The doctrine of *ex nihilo* creation, then, would mean that all existence needs nothing for its existence other than God. If this is the meaning of creation, how can it be distinguished from emanation. This discussion illustrates the conflict that vexed the minds of the Muslim philosophers who wished to justify their belief in contingent creation without at the same time relinquishing the basic ideas of neo-Platonic philosophy.

Another principle to which Miskawaih has faithfully adhered, is the assumption that from one only one can proceed. Basing his argument on this principle he enumerates the famous neo-Platonic order of beings—the Intelligence, the soul, the Nine Spheres, and the world.¹⁷

THE INTELLIGENCE

The Intelligence is the first creation of God, everything else is created mediately through it. It is the first affluence of the Real Outpourer (*Mufīd Ḥāqīqī*),¹⁸ who is the sustainer of its being. It makes no difference if we say that the Intelligence is the first emanation of God. With regard to the nature of this emanation or creation Miskawaih makes no observation. Even the famous neo-Platonic metaphor of light has not been alluded to at all. Is this procession necessary or free? Choose whatever you like, since freedom and necessity are one with the Divine will. As compared with God, who is undifferentiated and indeterminate, the Intelligence is differentiated into thought and being. It is conscious of its own essence, and its consciousness is different from its essence. Essentially dualistic, it is the source of plurality. It has the Platonic world of Forms, the totality of all verities.¹⁹ It is everlasting and eternal, though not independent of God. Compared with all other beings it is most perfect, but as compared with God it is imperfect.²⁰ It is immovable,

since movement is for perfection and there is no higher degree of perfection for it to achieve. Obviously it cannot be God.²¹

The relation of the Intelligence to God has not been defined by Miskawaih. For Plotinus it is the mind or thought of the One, Who is above thought. It is always contemplating its source, and this contemplation is its life. In contemplating it enjoys nearness to God and eternal bliss. Contemplation is the source of all its activity, which manifests itself in the creation of the Soul and through its mediation the world.²²

THE SOUL

The Soul proceeds from the Intelligence, but the nature of the procession is again not clear. The essence of the Soul lies in movement in which consists its life.²³ It is the principle of motion in the system. Its movement is self-caused, and is in a circle, since the most perfect movement is circular. The reason why the Soul moves lies in the fact that it is imperfect and desires to be perfect.²⁴ The movement of the Soul is in two directions, which, however, have no spatial reference. In the first it moves towards its source and contemplates upon it, and thereby perceives all the intelligible verities which are in the Intelligence. In so doing it images the perfection of its source and becomes more perfect.²⁵ Contemplation causes union with its object, the Soul is united with the Intelligence.²⁶ But this union does not mean the end of the separate identity of the Soul.

The Second movement of the Soul is downwards, and to this movement the whole world and all the Spheres owe their existence and activity. This downward motion of the Soul has two levels: the higher where it acts as a transcendental principle of form, order and intelligent direction, and the lower where it operates as an immanent principle of life and growth.²⁷ The lower becomes so distinct from the higher that it may be treated as the fourth principle. It is called Nature. Nature is simultaneously the totality of material beings, and the law that governs their motion, the active force that energises them to growth and perfection. Nature is not material nor is it a function of matter. It is the lowest of all spiritual existences, the slumbering Soul, so to say.²⁸

Though in forming and ordering the material world, the Soul acts as an immanent principle, yet it is not incarnate in the world. It is above time and space; it itself remains at rest while it vivifies the

world and gives it the being that it has. It directs the world from its abode on high, which it deems worthy of its care. Although the activity of the Soul in the world is spontaneous, the overflowing of contemplation into action, yet it involves a sort of fall,²⁹ a diversion from the perfect activity of contemplation upon the Intelligence.

The objects of the sensible world are combinations of form and matter. But the essence of an object consists in its form. Matter is only a principle of reception, a mere receptacle of forms.³⁰ It is devoid of reality, and has no activity and no life. It is an abstraction, a privation, a non-being. A being is its form, and the form flows from the Soul. Thus the whole world is the creation of the Soul; matter serves only as the subject of the activity of the Soul. But matter is not only pure negativity. It exercises a positive influence of a sinister kind. It checks and hinders the activity of the Soul, and causes disorder, defect and imperfection. It is evil and dark, and is the source of all evil and darkness.³¹

In what relation the individual souls stand to the universal Soul is not discussed. We are only told that they enter the body from outside and return to their source at the death of the latter. They are related to their bodies as the World Soul is related to the world. To a detailed consideration of this relation and the life of the individual soul we will soon return.

The order of being that we have just sketched is a graded hierarchy, God at the top and Nature at the bottom. This gradation is at once a principle of being, knowledge and value. The higher in this order is more real and more perfect and possesses a superior kind of knowledge. It causes the lower, moves and governs it, encompasses it in knowledge, and bestows on it its perfection.³² The lower owes its being and activity to the higher and returns to it in contemplating upon it. It cannot comprehend the higher except that it is, and that it is the source of its own being and activity.³³ But since the higher flows into the lower, the lower contemplates the higher by rising to it. The perfection of the lower consists in its contemplation of the higher and uniting with it in its imitation. Contemplation is at once self-realization and self-transcendence.

Although this hierarchy is simultaneously an order of reality, value and knowledge, the determining principle of this order is knowledge. True knowledge consists in concepts, and concepts are universals. The progress of thought is from the less universal to the more universal. But the more universal is more harmonious, particularity is the principle

of disharmony. Harmony and universality are the measures of the progress of thought. Now, it is the fundamental principle of Platonic philosophy that what is real is definitely conceivable and knowable.³⁵ Thought is the measure of reality. The more universal and harmonious is the more real. The more particular is not only more indefinite and unknowable, it is also more unreal. A second principle of Platonic philosophy identifies the real with the good,³⁶ with the result that the order of reality is at once the order of goodness, and thought is their common measure. Plotinus fully adhered to these principles, only he carried further the Platonic dialectic and made explicit what was implicit in the master. The purpose of the Platonic dialectic is to reduce the particular to the universal, the more determinate to less determinate, the multiplicity to unity. It is precisely by this process that Plotinus reaches his One, the highest universal, the least determinate, nay, the absolutely indeterminate. As supreme reality One is definitely knowable, but not in thought, since thought is essentially dualistic. He is knowable in a higher kind of ecstatic experience in which all distinctions are obliterated.

By adopting this philosophy in essence Miskawaih could not give up or modify its fundamental principles. He likewise could not escape their implications. It is essential to this philosophy that thought should be considered to constitute the highest good, contemplation should be exalted over action or production, since the former is the realization of the universal, the more real and perfect, while the latter involves into the particular, the less real and the less perfect. The attainment of the highest ideal requires turning away from the concrete and the material, progress is a process of interiorisation. But the most important implication of this philosophy lies in its impact on the idea of God and His relation to man. The logic of the system requires that God should be placed above action and creation, above providence and governance, above revelation and *tashrīʿ* (legislation), beyond worship and prayer—in short, above all for which He has to descend to the world of the Soul. And actually the case is not very different. The functions of the Islamic God have been ascribed to the Intelligence and the Soul; He is only the object of contemplation. If we do not find these conclusions explicitly stated in Miskawaih's theology, the reason does not lie in any deliberate and consistent modification of the principles but in their obscurity. I have already pointed out, for instance, that the relation of God with the Intelligence is not at all clear. Similarly the functions of the Intelligence and the

Soul are not precisely defined. Consequently they have been overshadowed and God has become conspicuous. But nowhere has He been described as the Providence (Rub), nor has He been considered the source of revelation, which is ascribed, as we shall see, to the Intelligence. The absence of a conception of duty to God, so much emphasised by the theologians, may be partly due to this conception of God. After these observations we turn to Miskawaih's theory of the evolution of the world.

THE WORLD

The universe is an organic unity. From inanimate bodies to higher spiritual beings, from the centre of the earth to the topmost surface of the ninth heaven, all is one whole, like an organism composed of different parts.³⁷ It may, however, be broadly divided into two wholes; one is the world of becoming and corruption in which we live, the other is that in which generation and corruption, i.e. mutability and change, life and death, find no entrance. This is the universe of heavens and planets. The mode of its composition and form is such that between two heavens there is no gap or breach, and neither is susceptible to alteration.³⁸ Divine wisdom has made the existing things of the universe in such a way that all species are linked up in a continuous order, in a garland of surpassingly wonderful kind.³⁹

The primary elements or the second matter receive new forms and shape into bodies. They form the first link in the chain of evolution, the first point from which the Circle of Being starts. Evolution consists in the appearance of new forms, which flow from the Soul. From inanimate bodies to the highest form of animal life the Soul acts as an immanent principle, as Nature.⁴⁰

The second major step in evolution lies in the appearance of the vegetative form, which consists in new powers of assimilation, growth, expansion in space, excretion of waste material and reproduction.⁴¹ In their participation in this form, plants differ widely. They have also their own particular forms beside this major form. Miskawaih has broadly divided the plant kingdom into three stages: the lower, the middle and the higher.⁴² We need not enter into these details. They are graded from lower to higher and the highest one almost touches the boundaries of animal life.⁴³

In the appearance of animal life Nature takes another great step forward in the evolution of forms. Animals first develop their power

of appetite, then their power of anger and lastly their power of sensation. But the five powers of sensation do not develop all at once, they appear one after another in different organic beings. The most perfect are those which possess all the five.⁴⁴ Further development takes place in the degree of sensation, till we have animals like monkey that are most similar to man and can imitate his actions without any previous instruction and practice.⁴⁵

The next major appearance is man, and the form that distinguishes him from other animals consists in the power of discrimination and reason.⁴⁶ Here also there is infinite divergence in individual participation in the common form. Some people are so weak in their reason and discrimination that they can hardly be distinguished from animals. At this lowest rung of humanity are people who inhabit the regions of extreme south or north. They know not what is beneficial, nor can they acquire knowledge and wisdom. After this stage the rational Soul goes on progressing until we have men in the third, fourth and fifth climes, perfect in reason and quick in intelligence. They have ability of the highest degree in every sort of art and craft, and acquire deep penetration and wide proficiency in abstruse sciences and fine arts.⁴⁷

"The most noble and eminent effect goes further till we come to the most learned and the most perfect men who for their sound thought and right opinion are famed throughout the ages and are incomparable. They are so quick in understanding and have such penetrating intelligence that they gain knowledge of future states and events. Their genius is developed to such an extent that they see unseen things as though they were under a thin curtain. When man reaches this noble degree he comes close to the plane of angels. By angels are meant those beings who are above the level of human beings."⁴⁸

Miskawaih's evolution does not stop here. Angels form the next higher stage. Their distinctive form or true nature, however, is not discussed. We cannot therefore identify them with celestial spheres (as al-Fārābī has done),⁴⁹ nor can we guess their relation to these spheres. Though evolution is continuous and ends in the angels, thus completing the Circle of Being,⁵⁰ yet Miskawaih does not discuss higher forms of existence above the human level.

Continuity is the cardinal feature of evolution. All beings and species are so continuous and interlinked that it is difficult to draw a line anywhere, although it is not impossible. But a species does not change or develop into the next higher species. Miskawaih makes no allusion to the idea of the transformation of species ; his metaphor of

garland illustrates the immutability of the species. It is also characteristic of his evolution that every being unites in itself all the antecedent forms of evolution in outline. Man in his turn unites in himself all the forms of plant and animal life.⁵¹ The growth of a child takes place in two distinct phases : one under the influence of Nature that develops in him the powers of appetition, anger and sensation, the second begins under the guidance of reason.⁵² The first power to emerge in this phase is that of discrimination, in the end comes reason.⁵³

In fact evolution is a process of progressive realization of reason. The active force behind evolution is the Soul. In sub-human beings it is unconscious and sleeping, in man and super-human beings it is conscious, that is, rational. In lower beings the effect of matter on which the forms of the Soul are impressed, is predominant. But with progress in evolution its effect gradually decreases, and the impression of the Soul constantly increases. Evolution is a sort of struggle between the Soul and matter, in which the former ultimately predominates. It is a process of the self-consciousness of the Soul, a realization of its own end and destiny, a self emancipation and liberation, a final triumph of reason over matter.

Evolution is purposive, and the purpose lies in the realization of the form that is distinctive of any being. Every being has some powers that are common to beings lower than it, but it has some others that are distinctive of it, those that go to constitute its separate identity. Following the tradition of Greek philosophy, Miskawaih identifies the essence of a being with its distinctive form, the nature with the differentia. And since the final cause is the same as the formal cause, the end or purpose of a being lies in the realization of its distinctive form. In realising its distinctive form, a being fulfils God's purpose in its creation.

This conclusion is full of great consequences for Miskawaih's ethics. The distinctive form of man is his reason, it is that which distinguishes him from animals. It follows that the essence of man, or his true nature is identical with his reason. All other powers of man are excluded from his essence. They may be a condition of, or serve as a means for, the realization of his end, but they cannot enter into it. They can be in no way a part of his true happiness or good. Even the empirical knowledge that is gained through the senses (a faculty common to animals) cannot strictly be an essential element of the human good. A second important result is that though the end of

man is the realization of his reason, yet he cannot attain to it except through progressive discipline of his appetites, anger and senses. He cannot jump to the acquisition of science or philosophy without at first cultivating moral virtues, the discipline of the body precedes the illumination of the Soul. This conclusion is based on the continuity of evolution and on the fact that man recapitulates the previous course of evolution in his growth. A third consequence of the theory of evolution is that it provides us with a scale of values. Although the ultimate good of man is the realization of his reason, yet in-so-far as other objects and achievements are helpful to this end, they are also good, they have value. Now there are two ways of ascertaining their relative value ; one is empirical or inductive and the other deductive. Miskawaih employs the second method. The order in which different powers appear in the evolution of man is also the order of their value, anger is of a higher value than appetite, and discrimination is more valuable than anger. Reason appearing in the last is placed at the summit. It is the end of all. The order of reality is the same as the order of goodness.

MAN

Man is a combination of two substances, soul and body, which are diametrically opposed to each other in their essence, qualities and functions. The soul is a spiritual substance, pure, simple, indivisible and immortal. It enters the body from outside, but though temporarily tied to the body, it is in no way dependent on it. It is not related to the body as form to matter, but has its own existence.⁵⁴ After the bond of union is cut, it flies whence it came. The body on the other hand is a combination of material elements, and as a combination is subject to all sorts of decay. At death its decomposition is final and for good.

Miskawaih finds the proof of this dualistic doctrine in the nature of human knowledge. It is the essential property of matter that it cannot simultaneously assume two different forms ; a body cannot be a cube, for instance, and a sphere at the same time. Now when we examine the nature of perception we see that there is a principle in man which assumes so many different forms simultaneously, that is, it can perceive a number of objects at one and the same time. This principle, therefore, cannot be matter. Nor can it be a function of matter. For a thing which assumes different forms and states, cannot

itself be one of those forms and states, in its own nature it must be without any form. Further, these states and forms are constantly changing. There must be then beyond the sphere of change some permanent substratum which is the foundation of personal identity. This proves that the soul is neither matter nor a function of matter.⁵⁵ A number of other arguments⁵⁶ have also been adduced in support of this view.

Although man is a combination of a body and a soul, in this unique combination the body is nothing more than an instrument⁵⁷ in the hands of the soul. As matter the body is in fact devoid of life and activity, it is the subject of the soul's action. Humanity consists in the soul, and is identified with it.⁵⁸ Miskawaih is not prepared to make the body an integral part of the nature of man, as the Stoics⁵⁹ did. Nor does he regard it as an unnecessary element to be dropped as soon as possible, as Speusippus⁶⁰ and Porphyry.⁶¹ The body for him is a necessary instrument of the soul which it uses in the achievement of its own perfection so long as it remains in the body.

Nevertheless the relation between the soul and the body is not one-sided. The soul is also affected by the body in diverse ways. The diseases of the body, for example, may upset the balance of the soul, and may even seriously hamper the function of reason.⁶² In fact all disorder, error, imperfection and evil that is produced in the soul is due to its contact with the body. Body is the cause of all evil.⁶³ This sinister influence of the body on the soul, it may be admitted, is quite baffling. How can a body that is inert and without activity exercise such an evil influence on a principle that is higher than it, and is diametrically opposed to it? But although this is unintelligible, it is nevertheless consistent with the first principles of his philosophy. We may recollect that though matter is a non-being, yet it is evil and the source of all evil. The body is only a particular form of the universal matter.

The life of the soul consists in motion⁶⁴, which, like the motion of the Universal soul, is in two directions. One is upwards in which the soul ascends to the Intelligence, and the other downwards in which it descends to matter. In the former it contemplates the Intelligence, images its perfection and by so doing acquires light and splendour, and itself becomes illuminated, thereby achieving its perfection.⁶⁵ In the latter, on the other hand, it confers light and illumination on matter, and makes material bodies perfect.⁶⁶ In one it becomes completely absorbed in its own essence, and joining the essence of the

Creator becomes unified with it. In the other dispersion and variability are produced in it, in which it becomes separate from its essence and experiences a sort of misery which this direction entails.⁶⁷ Miskawaih suggests that these two directions of the movement of the soul have been designated by the Sharī'ah of Islam as right and left.⁶⁸

The essential function of the soul consists in perception. It perceives the intelligibles as well as the sensibles. The power of perception, i.e. the rational soul, is the same, only the modes of perception vary.⁶⁹ In the case of the intelligibles, the soul turns to itself, musters its powers and becomes intent on its own essence, and obtains exhilaration and delight. In intellection the soul has no need of any external instrument. It is completely independent of the body and enjoys perfect freedom. Intellection is perfect knowledge.⁷⁰ In the case of the perception of the sensibles, on the other hand, the soul has to turn away from its essence, lose touch with it, and seek the assistance of the instrumentality of the senses. Sensation is imperfect knowledge.⁷¹

To account for the possibility of sensation, rather for the wider problem of the interaction of the soul and the body, Miskawaih adopts the concept of the natural spirit⁷² (*Rūḥ-e-Ṭabā'ī*), a concept of which Galen gave the final formulation. Natural spirit is the vapoury substance formed in the minute arteries of the brain as a result of the gradual rarification and refinement of food material, first in the digestive organs of the stomach, then in the liver, heart, and the arteries that carry the blood to the brain. In virtue of its fineness it is able to receive the exuberance of the soul, which in order to act on it has to move down, and lose in its fineness and subtlety. The natural spirit then goes through the whole body. When it enters the eyes it causes vision, when it enters the ears it causes hearing, and so on.⁷³ This theory of sensation clearly implies that in acts of sensation the soul has to suffer a kind of diminution in its refinement and a positive loss in its perfection.

Above sensation we have imagination whose centre lies in the forepart of the brain. The next higher faculty is memory whose centre lies in the posterior part of the brain. Superior and more excellent than all is the power of thought. It is in virtue of this power that the soul conceives the abstract and the intelligible.⁷⁴ As against all the other powers of the soul which are common to all animals the power of thought is peculiar to man.⁷⁵ It resides in the middle part

of the brain. This power of thought, writes Miskawaih, is identical with humanity. The more it grows and the sounder it is, the more is man distinct from beasts and the more he gains in humanity.⁷⁶ He who uniformly uses this power, considers always the causes and the primary principles of everything sensed or intellected, and keeps moving towards the Intelligence, upon him the Intelligence bestows the realities of things perceived.⁷⁷ These realities are simple and eternal. They absorb the whole attention and endeavour of man who goes on progressing until he arrives at a stage by going beyond which he could cross the bounds of humanity and attain to the rank of angels, which is more abstract and luminous than humanity.⁷⁸

‘He who reaches this stage is in one of these two states. He either makes continuous natural progress, that is, as long as he lives he deeply studies existing things in order that he may become acquainted with their realities to the utmost of his mortal power. By persistent thinking his speculation becomes so acute and powerful that divine matters and spiritual mysteries become transparent to his soul as self-evident matters. This clearness is of such a kind that it needs no syllogistic reasoning, since in the latter the progress is from lower to higher, whereas to the clear and bright light of reason of that great person everything becomes instantaneously manifest. This is one state, it involves a gradual ascent to the pure intelligibles, and it is the way of the philosophers.’⁷⁹

‘The other state is that in which the pure intelligibles themselves descend to him. In the first there is a gradual progress from sensation to imagination, reflection and finally to thought, in which the intelligible realities that are in the Intelligence are reflected. In the case of the other this process is reversed. The intelligibles themselves come down to reason, which in turn affects the reflective power, and the reflection affects the imagination, which lastly affects the sensory powers. Then the man begins to see the intelligible realities and their cause and origin in such a way as if they were in the phenomenal world outside his mind, and as if he were seeing them with his eyes, hearing them with his ears, just as one sees the objects of dream in his imagination and thinks that he is seeing them as external.This is the state of the prophets.’⁸⁰

This is Miskawaih’s theory of prophecy or revelation. This is how he relates the prophetic revelation to the general law of evolution. It may be observed that on this view both the philosopher and the prophet comprehend the same intelligible realities, and in this real

function of theirs they are one. Moreover, the source of the intelligible realities is the same, viz., the Intelligence ;⁸¹ revelation is the act of Intelligence. It also follows that there is no antagonism between reason and revelation, that both are equally competent to penetrate to spiritual mysteries and to comprehend reality ; and that in matters of ethical knowledge, reason is perfectly sufficient, a view that has been stated expressly in *al-Hawāmil wa'l-Shawāmil* (p: 192).⁸²

As noted above there are two modes of perception : the rational (Jehat-e-'Aql), and the sensory (Jehat-e-Hiss). Miskawaih also calls them faculties (Quwā), and sometimes even parts of the soul, though generally he avoids the use of the last term.

The rational mode of perception or the rational soul is simple, and pure. It is absolutely independent of the body and immortal.⁸³ The sensory mode of perception or the sensing soul, on the other hand, is completely dependent on the body, and cannot work except through its organs. As such, its fate is bound up with that of the body, and hence the death of the body brings it also to its doom. The sensing soul, therefore, unlike its counterpart, is perishable.⁸⁴

So far the sensing soul has been regarded as a mode of perception. Therefore when it is said that it perishes with the body we understand that with death this mode of perception of the soul ceases. So far it is quite consistent. But later the concept of the sensing soul is enlarged to cover the whole of the human life, excepting reason. All the appetities, desires, feelings and emotions are subsumed under it.⁸⁵ It now becomes the irrational soul of Plato, which he goes on to divide, following Plato, into two parts, the spirited and the appetitive. The former is the faculty of the soul by which it exercises anger, vigour and initiative in meeting dangers, and pursues the desire for domination, promotion and varieties of honour. The latter is the faculty of the soul by which it exercises passionate desires and pursues pleasures of eating, drinking, marriage and the like.⁸⁶

Miskawaih's arguments⁸⁷ for the immortality of the soul have all been taken from Plato. What strikes us in his discussion is that he does not allude to the idea of the moral necessity of the next life, which is so conspicuous in the *Qur'ān* that it can hardly be overlooked. There is another point for consideration. Granting that the soul survives, we may well ask what is the precise nature of that which survives. Can it be a sufficient condition for future retribution or reward ? We are told that sensation, imagination and memory are common to the sub-human soul and are perishable, only reason is

immortal. The obvious conclusion from this view is that in the next life there will be no recollection of the worldly life, since there will be no memory. This invalidates moral reward or punishment, of whose ground the soul would be quite ignorant. It further confines the life hereafter to an activity of intellectual illumination or ignorance. This is a very unsatisfactory idea of the next life.

As every other principle, the soul comes ultimately from God and returns to it in the end. God is the source of being as well as the final goal. This return is effected in contemplation.⁸⁸ The soul first contemplates Intelligence and unites with it. Then as intelligence it contemplates God and achieves its final union. How this union is attained is not quite clear. The logic of the system requires that it should be a supra-rational ecstatic experience, the intuitive experience of the mystic. But being antagonistic to mysticism, Miskawaih avoids the term ecstasy. What actually he means is hard to ascertain. This union with God is the highest happiness of the soul, to a detailed study of which we now turn.

CHAPTER IV

Happiness (al-Sa'adah)

SA'ADAH, THE CENTRAL PROBLEM OF ETHICS

THE central problem of philosophical ethics in Islam is the problem of sa'ādah (happiness). It is the problem of the end or the ideal of human life. Ethics is the science par excellence of this ideal. Since the ideal of life cannot be conceived of except as good, the end and the good are identical. The concept of the good is so fundamental to Muslim ethics, that the latter can well be defined as the science of the good. Not only is the good the basic concept, it is the only primary concept. Every other concept is derived from it. Virtue is the disposition of the soul in which and through which sa'ādah is realised, and actions that proceed from such dispositions to achieve sa'ādah are right. Apart from this neither virtue nor the right has any other significance. Muslim philosophical ethics is completely teleological. Steeped in Greek ideas, the philosophers of Islam could not conceive of the independence of the concept of the right. They were not even troubled by the contemporary theological attempt to prove the revelational nature of Islamic morality, nor by the idea of duty that this attempt brought to the fore.

Miskawaih is the greatest representative of philosophical ethics in Islam. Sa'ādah for him is the central and basic problem. His first book on ethics, *Al-Sa'ādah* is devoted exclusively to this problem. His next larger and more comprehensive book *Tahdhīb Al-Akhlāq*, beside enunciating the basic idea of sa'ādah in the first chapter, has devoted a whole chapter (i.e. the third) to its elaboration. Also the three last chapters of the second book on the Soul in his metaphysical treatise *Al-Fauz* are occupied with this problem. This shows the importance that sa'ādah has in Miskawaih's ethical system.

However, in his *Tahdhīb* he does not begin with sa'ādah. The first chapter of the book deals, as noted above, with the conception of the soul and its relation with the body, and then gives an outline of the whole ethical theory that has been expounded in the book. The

second chapter begins with a discussion of character, which serves as a medium for the analysis of virtue and moral sa'adah. It is only in the third chapter that he takes up the problem of sa'adah in detail, knowing fully that Aristotle, whom he mostly follows, opened his *Nicomachean Ethics* with this very problem.

The reason for this departure is obvious. Considering the fact that sa'adah is a wider concept, embracing all aspects of life along with the moral, Miskawaih has considered it more appropriate to devote a book (*Al-Sa'adah*) exclusively to its exposition. However, that aspect of sa'adah which forms more properly the object of ethics, i.e. the moral sa'adah, has not been fully treated in this book. It is this task that has been attempted in the *Tahdhīb*. "It is the exposition of the moral perfection," says Miskawaih, "that we aim at in this book."¹

And since moral sa'adah consists in virtuous character, in the *Tahdhīb* he has chosen to begin with the analysis of character. Probably the reason may lie deeper in the very idea of ethics. The term for the science of ethics in Arabic is *'Ilm Al-Akhlāq*, or *Ṣanū'at al-Akhlāq*, which suggests *khulq* or character as the object of this science. This suggestion becomes more fascinating to later writers on ethics such as Naṣīruddīn Ṭūsī and Jalāluddīn Dawwānī, who define ethics in terms of character.² This change was probably encouraged by a reading of *Magna Moralia*, which is ascribed to Aristotle. The writer of this book begins his discussion of ethics in these words: "Since we propose to speak on ethics (*hyper ethikon*) we must first consider of what moral character (*ethos*) is a part. In a word, then, it seems to be a part of naught else but politics. For it is not possible to act in political matters without exhibiting some moral quality, for instance, goodness. Now goodness consists in possessing different virtues. And if one is to act in political matters, one ought to possess good character. Therefore, the scientific consideration of human character (*hyperia ethy pragmata*) would seem to be a part and in fact the beginning of politics."³ The reason for this change in the conception of ethics might have lain, as Alexander Grant suggests, in the etymology of the term.⁴ It is most likely that Miskawaih was influenced by this new significance that character came to possess as the starting point in the science of ethics.

In our exposition of Miskawaih's ethics we shall begin with the conception of sa'adah and not with character. The reason for this return to the original position lies in the very idea of sa'adah. Sa'adah is a wider concept comprehending the whole of life. Along with

morality it also includes all rational activity, philosophical and scientific. Even art is not excluded from its scope. Every activity of the soul whether individual or social, in the family or in the state, falls equally within its orbit. Sa'ādah is the object of ethics no less than it is the object of politics, of economics (the science of the household), and of any other social science.

The sa'ādah that is more properly the object of ethics is moral sa'ādah as distinguished from al-sa'ādah (i.e. sa'ādah in general). It is obvious that without a view of sa'ādah in general, we can hardly appreciate moral sa'ādah. It is the idea of al-sa'ādah that is the object of Miskawaih's *Al-Sa'ādah*, while his later work, the *Tahdhīb*, is mainly concerned with moral sa'ādah, and since no discussion of it can be complete or intelligible without a wider conception of al-sa'ādah he has to refer time and again⁵ to his *Al-Sa'ādah*. To present Miskawaih's idea in his own words we would quote a passage from the *Tahdhīb*. "One cannot attain to perfect sa'ādah," he writes, "without learning all kinds of wisdom and philosophy, as it has been described in *Al-Sa'ādah*. There is no short-cut here. Both kinds of perfection, theoretical and practical, are essential, and my purpose in writing the *Tahdhīb* after *Al-Sa'ādah* is nothing except that the highest sa'ādah which is the end of true philosophy may become clear from my discussion in both the books, and that the soul may purify itself and prepare for this ultimate end. This is why I have entitled the *Tahdhīb* also as the *Taḥḥīr al-Ā'rāq*. (The Cleansing of the Veins).⁶

In fact as this quotation shows, and as we shall see later in detail, theoretical perfection is the ultimate sa'ādah (al-sa'ādat al-quṣwā) and moral perfection, though organically related to it, is nevertheless subservient to it. In the interest of logical coherency and convenience, the better course would be to begin with the concept of sa'ādah in general and then proceed to the exposition of moral sa'ādah, of which the analysis of character forms the starting point.

THE CONCEPT OF SA'ADAH

To find the exact equivalent of sa'ādah in English is difficult almost impossible. Generally the term used for it is happiness, but it is an unsatisfactory equivalent. Literally happiness means a state of feeling, differing from pleasure by its suggestion of permanence, depth and serenity,⁷ whereas sa'ādah is a comprehensive concept,

including in it happiness, prosperity, success, perfection, blessedness, and beauty.⁸ Similarly, as compared with its Greek original, *eudaimonia*, which in ordinary usage meant happiness often with special reference to external prosperity,⁹ *sa'ādah* has a fullness and completeness of meaning that is not found in the original. Well-being is another possible equivalent, but that too, falls short of its plenitude and sublimity. *Sa'ādah* primarily means the attainment of some desirable end or good, involving happiness or pleasure as a necessary concomitant. But in the widest sense the end or good expands to embrace the whole life and becomes the ideal or the end of all the activities of the soul.

The soul has two kinds of states, one that is the object of praise or blame, and the other that is not. Ethics is, however, concerned only with the former, which is of three kinds: cognitive, accidental and conative. The cognitive is the general activity of knowing, including sensation, intellection and discrimination or evaluation. The accidental compares desires or appetites, impulses, emotions and feelings, such as pleasure, joy, pity, kindness, etc. The denomination of affections and desires as accidental to the soul (*'Awāriḍ al-Nafs*) suggests that they do not belong to the real nature of the soul, but are the external and temporary outgrowths. This view which has been set forth in *Al-Sa'ādah* (pp. 44-45) is in perfect harmony with the theory of man that we have studied in the previous chapter, according to which the essence of humanity lies in the soul, the body and its desires being a super-imposition on the soul, an addition to real humanity. The conative is the result of the cognitive and the accidental. Actions proceed either from the one or the other, or from their combination.

All the states of the soul—cognitive, accidental or conative—are purposive. Purposeless or random acts do not emanate from the soul. Even the acts of Nature, which is an inferior principle, have some end or purpose, and the same is the case with art which, as imitation of Nature, is still more inferior. It is all the more necessary that the activities of the soul must have some end. The end cannot but be good, the contrary is inconceivable. There must also be a final end to which all other ends lead, and in which they find their completion. There must be, therefore, a final end or an ultimate good to which every act of the soul—cognitive, accidental and conative—is directed.¹⁰

Now the final end must be chosen for its own sake,¹¹ and never

as a means to anything else, otherwise it would not be final. It must also be self-sufficient.¹² That is, by itself it should make life worth living, and one who attains to it will no longer wish for anything else that may be worth desiring.

This final end or the chief good is Miskawaih's *al-sa'adah*. *Al-sa'adah* must, therefore, have the qualities of finality, self-desirability, and self-sufficiency. So far, we have only discovered the essential qualities of *sa'adah*. Now the all important question is: What is *sa'adah*? What does it consist in?

SA'ADAH AND THE PLATONIC GOOD

Before discussing this problem we must make it clear that Miskawaih does not identify *sa'adah* or the ultimate good with the Platonic Good. Like Aristotle he maintains that human good is different from the Good. But his attitude towards the Good and the relation of the human good with it does not seem to be the same as that of Aristotle.¹³

Miskawaih repeatedly emphasises that the Good has its own being, and that *sa'adah*, on the contrary, has no being of its own.¹⁴ This is certainly a Platonic idea, which is in perfect harmony with Miskawaih's general philosophy. Besides, there is nothing in his books that may explicitly endorse Aristotle's criticism of the Platonic Good or amount to an implicit acceptance of his conclusions.

Aristotle's criticism of the Platonic Good aims at proving that the Good like other Ideas has no real being, that it has no meaning common to all its applications, and that, even if there were such an Idea of the Good, it could be of no use in forming the conception of the good of man, still less in its realization.¹⁵ On the contrary, Miskawaih believes that the Good, which is the same as God, does really exist, that human good is related to the Absolute Good in a very significant and important way, and that no intelligible conception of human good can be formed without reference to the Good, nor can it be realised in complete detachment from it. On all these points, as we shall see¹⁶, Miskawaih is in complete agreement with Plato.

WHAT IS SA'ADAH?

Now to come back to the question: What does *sa'adah* consist in? Immediately a number of things force themselves upon our

attention—pleasure, honour, wealth, health etc. Does sa‘ādah consist in any one of them, or in all of them taken together? Miskawaih subjects the first alternative to searching criticism, but does not examine the other.

Pleasure cannot constitute sa‘ādah for the following reasons. It is not desirable for its own sake, it is the result and not the end of a desirable act. Some pleasant things are even undesirable, and many things have an independent value of their own quite apart from the pleasure they bring. Pleasure is related to the body and as such cannot be the object of the soul. To make sa‘ādah consist in pleasure would mean subjecting the spiritual to the material, the eternal to the transient, the real to the unreal, and the higher to the lower¹⁷. This will amount to a flagrant violation of the law of evolution and progress. A life of bodily pleasures is worthy of animals and brutes, but it is far beneath the dignity of man. It hinders the activity of the rational soul, and thwarts the achievement of its distinctive perfection¹⁸. Above all, pleasure is essentially negative, it is only the removal of pain, which invariably precedes it. One cannot, for instance, feel pleasure in eating and drinking unless one has undergone the pain of hunger or thirst. This holds true also for all bodily pleasures without exception. Pleasure as a rule is emancipation from pain¹⁹. It has only a negative value. How then can it be an end in itself. Its undesirability is evident from the feeling of shame that those who indulge in it inevitably experience and who try to hide their shameful acts from other eyes. It can also be observed in those not infrequent expressions of praise or admiration which spontaneously come from the hearts of such men for those who abstain from pleasure.²⁰ Lastly, pleasure cannot be sought indefinitely. It soon turns out to be evil if pursued beyond a point, whereas sa‘ādah can never change into evil.²¹

Honour,²² too, cannot constitute sa‘ādah. It does not so much affect those to whom it is paid as those who pay it. Its value, moreover, consists essentially in the fact that it produces the consciousness of worth, which, therefore, is of more value than the honour itself.

Wealth²³ and health²⁴ have still less claim. They are not sought for their own sakes, rather they are the means to other ends. They thus lack the most fundamental characteristic of sa‘ādah. Miskawaih does not examine virtue as Aristotle does²⁵. Probably this is an oversight.

If sa‘ādah does not consist in pleasure, wealth, honour, or health,

what then does it consist in? The answer is provided by the concept of proper function. The idea of proper or distinctive function and the identification of happiness with its perfect realization is Platonic (*Republic*, 352—353). Aristotle borrowed this idea from him almost verbatim.²⁶ Although Miskawaih does not mention his source, yet most probably he took it from Aristotle. However, we can well find his source in Plato, since an Arabic translation of the *Republic* was available in his days.

We shall reproduce in full Miskawaih's formulation of this argument, because of its fundamental importance in the determination of *sa'adah*. We shall, however, postpone its examination till we have completed the exposition of his ethics. It runs as follows :

"All existing things in the universe whether animal, plant, any material body, or its simplest elements, e. g., fire, water, air and earth, likewise all the heavenly bodies, e. g., the sun and the stars, have powers, dispositions and functions of their own, by which they are distinguished from all the rest, and by virtue of which they are what they are. They also possess some powers, dispositions and functions which are shared by others.But it is its distinctive functions for which any being is created, since only it and no other being can best perform its specific function and serve its particular purpose. This is a universal law which governs everything in the heavens and on the earth in nature and in art. A thing is good if it serves its own special purpose and serves it in the required way. And it is perfect and *sa'id* (happy) in the proportion in which it achieves its purpose. A sword, for example, is meant for killing. That sword is therefore the best and most perfect which cuts sharp and deep, the same is the case with a horse and with every other thing. But if a horse fails in the performance of its specific function, to that extent it lacks the element of horseness and falls short of its perfection. No matter then, if such a horse is treated as an ass." (*Tahdhīb*, pp. 9—11).

The same argument has been advanced in '*Al-Sa'adah*,' in a somewhat different way. It is briefly as follows :

"Every thing that exists has some purpose for which it has been created or made. This fact is most clear in the objects of art. No instrument or object of art is without purpose. Also no object or instrument can completely fulfil the purpose of any other object. And the goodness of the object lies in the performance of that end which is peculiar to it and for which it has been made. This is also true of the objects of Nature, rather it is truer in their case, since Nature is prior

to art, it is the original which art imitates. Nature produces nothing that is without purpose, everything in whole or in part, the body or its various organs, has some purpose that is different from that of the others and is peculiar to it. No body or organ can replace the other, or perform its peculiar function. The working of this law is far more evident in the case of the soul, which is superior to Nature. Obviously, therefore, the goodness of man lies in the performance of that function which is peculiar to him. Man is the noblest of all creation and exemplifies this law in the highest degree." (pp. 33-34)

In the light of this argument *sa'adah* is elevated to the position of a universal concept. It is applicable to every being that exists, and consists in the realization of that function which is peculiar to or distinctive of any being. It is relative to a class or species, and even to a single individual. There is nothing in the argument to restrict its application to classes only.

We may here observe that the conclusion of this argument is the same which is the import of the philosophy of evolution set forth in the previous chapter. Both the arguments confine the essence of a being to its distinctive function or form and identify its end or good with the realization of that essence. The distinctive form of man according to the theory of evolution is his reason, and the peculiar function of man by the above argument may be easily found, says Miskawaih, to consist in the proper exercise of reason. The *sa'adah* of man therefore consists in the perfection of his reason. Though we have arrived at the conception of the *sa'adah* of man by the same general argument, yet it differs in an important way from the *sa'adah* of other beings. On the level of man *sa'adah* is not determined by the inexorable laws of nature as is the case with lower beings; on the the contrary, it is achieved by free voluntary activity.²⁷ In fact *sa'adah* in its real sense is true of human beings only, in extending the term to sub-human beings *sa'adah* loses much of its significance.²⁸

The *sa'adah* of man consists in the perfection of his reason. Now, reason is of two kinds, theoretical and practical.²⁹ The first is pure activity of thought and the second is reason in action. Or using the *Al-Sa'adah's* division of the activities of the soul, we may say that in the first reason is concerned with cognition, in the second with the accidentals—the organisation and direction of appetites, impulses and emotions. Corresponding to these two reasons we have the theoretical and the practical perfection or *sa'adah*. Miskawaih also calls the first distant or ultimate perfection, and the second proximate or moral perfec-

tion.³⁰ To explain the idea of the proximate and the ultimate sa'adah Miskawaih makes use of an analogy from art and another from nature.³¹ The proximate perfection of a hammer, he observes, lies in flattening hard bodies, but its ultimate perfection lies in making, for instance, a ring. Or, the proximate perfection of the stomach consists in digesting food, and its ultimate perfection lies in making up the deficiency of energy in the body. In the same way, the proximate perfection of man lies in acting according to reason, but his ultimate perfection lies in the pure activity of thought.³² A man, however, cannot attain to complete sa'adah unless he combines both the perfections.

THEORETICAL PERFECTION

The reason why theoretical perfection is the ultimate sa'adah, superior to and more valuable than moral perfection, lies deep in the philosophy of Miskawaih, as we have pointed out in the previous chapter. It is more valuable because here reason is directed to itself. Its activity is pure and has no reference to any thing except itself. It is exposed to least interruption, and affords the highest pleasure. It is least dependent on foreign support and external expedients. In pure activity of thought reason enjoys that peace and tranquillity which in the practical life of restless pursuit one cannot attain. Here reason takes possession of the most perfect and exact knowledge, and the objects of its contemplation are immutable and eternal spiritual realities. Here reason returns to its source and imitates its perfection. Here one is most God-like in his actions, only the pure contemplation can make possible the closest imitation of the Divine Being. This is the end of philosophy (which Miskawaih defines as the imitation of God). Only pure activity of thought raises man above the limitations of his humanity and unites him with the Eternal Being.³³

Thus theoretical perfection embraces the whole of philosophy, from mathematics and logic to physics and metaphysics, especially theology. Miskawaih has dealt with this point in detail in '*Al-Sa'adah*' (pp. 50-61), reaching the conclusion that one cannot attain to the highest theoretical perfection without acquiring all theoretical wisdom and sciences in the proper order. One can rise to the zenith of this perfection only through correct observation, keen insight, consistent thinking, true beliefs, firm convictions and vivid and clear knowledge of the Highest Being.³⁴

MORAL PERFECTION

Moral perfection consists in the acquisition of practical wisdom, and in the performance of actions dictated by it. It lies in the organisation of the activities of the appetitive and the spirited souls in conformity with the right rule or virtue. Moral perfection, in short, consists in virtue. We shall study the nature of virtue in detail in the succeeding chapters.

Miskawaih uses moral perfection in a sense almost synonymous with that of practical perfection.³⁵ Nowhere do we find any explicit distinction between the two. Practical perfection is a wider term embracing all kinds of actions, whether individual or social, in the family or in the government. It falls under the purview of economics as well as politics. This may seem to stretch the limits of morality too far. But in defence of Miskawaih it may be pointed out that it is very difficult, though not impossible, to draw a line distinguishing moral activity from political activity. Morality in its nature is social, and therefore cannot be confined within the bounds of individual life. Individual perfection is bound up with, and ultimately leads to, the perfection of the family and of society at large which form the next higher stages of moral *sa'adah*.

Moral perfection occupies a lower place as compared with theoretical perfection. For, here reason has to turn away from its essence, and engage in the accidentals—desires, impulses and affections. It has to deviate from its source and occupy itself with the world of matter. Moral life is, therefore, far inferior to the contemplative life.³⁶

RELATION BETWEEN THEORETICAL AND MORAL PERFECTION

The relation between practical and theoretical perfection has sometimes been conceived of as one between means and an end.³⁷ This is a logical conclusion from Miskawaih's theory of man, which identifies real humanity with reason or rational knowledge, and degrades the body to the position of means. But this means is indispensable and necessary. Moral perfection is, therefore, a necessary means to and condition of, theoretical perfection. There is no short cut to the pure life of contemplation. One has to purify oneself from vice and embellish one's soul with virtue before embarking on the pursuit of real knowledge.³⁸ Morality is a preparation for philosophy.

This disparaging view of morality can hardly be in conformity with general opinion, with the Islamic *Shar'iah* and with the moral interpre-

tation of history in which Miskawaih believes. Such considerations urge Miskawaih to elevate morality to a higher position than that of a means to philosophy to which his formal theory leads him. This motive is at work when he says that the relation between theoretical and practical perfection is one of form and matter.³⁹ This allows for a more intimate and organic relation between the two.

Explaining further what he wants to convey by form-and-matter relation, Miskawaih says that both the perfections complement each other, none can be fully realised without the other.⁴⁰ That is, moral perfection is not only a means to the realization of the ultimate happiness, but also a factor contributing to its completion.

This in fact is an effort to harmonise fact with theory. But without seriously modifying the conception of the place of the soul and the body in his conception of man, virtue cannot be made an ingredient of equal importance in the ultimate *sa'ādah* of man.

THE GOODS OF THE BODY AND FORTUNE

The attempt to reconcile fact with theory is further extended to the treatment of the goods of the body and fortune, which in no way belong to the soul, and therefore cannot enter into either the ultimate or the proximate *sa'ādah*. But although they do not constitute an element of *sa'ādah* they can not be completely excluded from it. Some of them proceed from moral and rational activity, e.g. fame, while others are conditions and means to *sa'ādah*. For instance, *sa'ādah* necessarily presupposes a certain completeness of life. A child cannot be happy any more than it can be virtuous, for it is incapable of any moral or rational activity.

Following Aristotle closely, Miskawaih makes different classifications⁴¹ of such goods. It is unnecessary to reproduce them all. We shall only select a few pertinent ones.

Though goods of fortune like noble birth, wealth and beauty are not essential to *sa'ādah* nevertheless they add to its perfection. Poverty, sickness and misfortune may provide a wise man with an incentive and an occasion for noble conduct, the gold of his character may even shine brighter. The really virtuous man can never be miserable.⁴² But although the virtuous can be contented with only a few gifts of fortune, in many respects such goods are not altogether unnecessary. Without wealth, power and influence little can be accomplished. Noble birth, beauty and joy in one's children contribute to perfect *sa'ādah*, friendship is still more necessary to the *sa'ād* than to the *shaqī* (unhappy), health is indispen-

sable to all. In short, besides spiritual goods a certain quantum of material and external advantages is indispensable to complete sa'adah.⁴³ Miskawaih fully endorses Aristotle's view that perfect sa'adah includes to a considerable extent, besides intellectual wisdom and moral excellence, soundness of health and senses, wealth, friends, good name and social success.⁴⁴ Like Pythagoras, Hippocrates and Plato, he does not think that sa'adah is complete if one has the virtue of the soul only and is deprived of the goods of the body or fortune.⁴⁵

There is an obvious looseness in this thinking. The goods of the body are held to be necessary elements in perfect sa'adah yet inconsistently enough they are not considered so important as to be included in the definition of sa'adah. On the one hand, the body does not form part of the essence of man, rather it positively thwarts the pure activity of the soul; on the other hand, the goods of the body are held to be indispensable to complete sa'adah. This brings out the conflict between a metaphysical theory and the interests of morality. To resolve this conflict Miskawaih maintains in many places that man is not only a soul but a body also.⁴⁶ If this means that the body is an essential part of humanity, it goes against his explicit statements. But if this interpretation is not accepted, his whole thesis tumbles down.

This conflict reaches its climax when the discussion enters upon the question of including the pleasures of the body in sa'adah. It may be noted that Aristotle's account of pleasure in spite of its originality and ability to accommodate different views is far from being consistent and satisfactory.⁴⁷ Miskawaih here completely abandons Aristotle and takes a perfectly negative attitude. He finds no place for pleasure in sa'adah, except as a necessary diversion from the serious activities of reason that one cannot pursue indefinitely so long as the soul is embodied. Pleasure is a relaxation. Its function is to recuperate and energise the soul for fresh and renewed activity.⁴⁸

Sa'adah, however, is not without its own pleasures, it is really the most pleasant achievement. Pleasure is of two kinds, one passive the other active, one material the other spiritual. Passive pleasure is common to non-rational animals, hence it cannot be an element in human sa'adah. It is passive because it is the result of the intense stimulation of some desire or impulse. Active pleasure is peculiar to the rational soul, it is active because it is self-caused. It is pure and perfect, while passive pleasure is imperfect and impure. It is desirable in itself, while the other can have no more than an instrumental value. Spiritual pleasure is eternal and permanent, while the material is transient and changing. It

is this spiritual pleasure which the soul enjoys in its intellectual and moral pursuits.⁴⁹

To sum up this discussion : The highest or the ultimate sa'ādah consists in the contemplation of intelligible realities, and of the most real being, God, and in effecting a union with Him in contemplation. Moral sa'ādah is the necessary condition of the ultimate sa'ādah and also its complement. The goods of the body and fortune are necessary to a certain extent for perfect sa'ādah. The pleasures of the body are necessary diversions. Sa'ādah itself is the most pleasant activity, and provides for the best and purest pleasure.

IS PERFECT SA'ĀDAH ATTAINABLE IN THIS LIFE ?

Whether perfect sa'ādah is attainable in this life is a question of special interest for Miskawaih. The religious consciousness of Islam considered perfect sa'ādah as consisting in the highest activity, 'aqlī (intellectual or intuitive) and akhlāqī (moral) combined with the greatest and purest pleasure. The vision of God was the acme of this sa'ādah and was realisable only in the next life. Plato believing the essence of man to consist in the soul, and its bodily habitation a hindrance to its most real and complete activity, considered that the realization of perfect happiness (i. e. the perception of the intelligibles) was possible only when the body was finally abandoned.⁵⁰ Later neo-Platonists even developed a sort of contempt towards the body.

But Aristotle, believing the relation of the soul to the body as one of form to matter, did not consider Sa'ādah as the exclusive function of the soul, or the body as an impediment to its complete realization. On the contrary, the body was a necessary base for sa'ādah, the potentiality to be actualised in virtue. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* (I, X, 2), he asks "Can Solon have meant that a man is happy when he has died?" and replies, "This would be an absurdity, especially since we consider happiness to be an *energeia*." Referring to this passage Miskawaih says that Aristotle concluded from it that perfect sa'ādah was attainable in this life. In fact Aristotle strove to make morality completely independent of any idea of the future life. He was not even clear as to the moral government of God.⁵¹

Not being satisfied with either of these two views, Miskawaih endeavours to effect a synthesis between them. Man, he says, has two kinds of virtue, spiritual and corporeal. The spiritual is completely independent of the body. It is the basis for man's participation in the

life of the angels (who are absolutely free from corporeality) in the higher world, and consist in the perception of the eternal intelligible verities, that is, in philosophic wisdom only. The corporeal is an animal virtue. It is confined to the lower world and consist in the organisation of its affairs. The lower and the higher worlds, he warns, are not same as the life on this earth and hereafter. "On the contrary" he says, "every thing that is perceivable through the senses is lower even if it pertains to the next life, and every thing that is intelligible is higher even if it is attained in this life."⁵² Thus for Miskawaih the fundamental distinction from the point of view of ethics does not lie, between this world and the next, but between a life of contemplation of the intelligibles and a life occupied with the sensibles. It is wrong, therefore, to ask the question. Is *sa'ādah* perfectly realisable in this or the next life? Do away with this bifurcation; and you have the correct answer. Perfect *sa'ādah* is realisable only in a life of contemplation of the intelligibles, and it can be attained in this life and the next. However the perfect *sa'ād* does not turn away from the world, but abiding at the higher level of spiritual and intellectual activity he takes interest in the affairs of society, its organisation and well-being.

But is this solution satisfactory? Does it remove the impeding influence of the body on the soul? Or does the body survive in the next life, so that the fundamental difference that is caused by the disembodiment of the soul may be obliterated. If this has not been proved, how can one deny that the question is important. We conclude that torn between two conflicting tendencies Miskawaih has not been able to work out a solution.

THE IDEAL MAN

The ideal man of Miskawaih has perfect knowledge of all that exists. 'This becomes possible for him, because he looks at things in their universal essence, not as particulars; and he who knows the universal knows the particular also'.⁵³ He contemplates those intelligibles which are eternal and immutable. In so doing his soul shakes itself free from all the finite limitations imposed on it by its embodiment, and is united with the Intelligence. The part becomes one with the whole, the affluence with the fount. Contemplation is self-realization and self-transcendence. United with the Intelligence the soul reflects the forms

of all the beings that are there in the Intelligence, and thereby becomes a world in itself, a microcosm.⁵⁴

This is not the end of the ascent. Having become one with the Intelligence, the soul now contemplates the Divine Being, and receives the overflowing of His grace. Its knowledge now becomes luminous. It is no longer discursive, but an intuitive comprehension in which the reality is caught hold of in an immediate perception.⁵⁵ One reaches so close to God that only a thin veil separates him from God. That, too, fades away in the highest experience of union with the Divine. This is the vision of God.⁵⁶ The nearer one reaches this goal, the greater is the joy or calm experienced by his soul. This state of bliss and certitude cannot be achieved by learning. It is a gift⁵⁷ of God.

It may be observed that Miskawaih nowhere mentions that the highest experience is ecstatic. It is certainly not discursive. Is it Plotinian ecstasy or Aristotelian intuitive thought? In the absence of any clear statement by Miskawaih on this point the question remains undecided. However, his view is closer to Aristotle's than to Plotinus', the union is more a kind of gaze on the Divine, a vision of God, than a unitary experience of the mystic.

Those who attain to this highest *sa'ādah* are always happy. Their thoughts are noble, their expectations high, and their minds at peace. Their life is regulated, their desires are submissive to their reason, their faculties developed, and their virtues profound and comprehensive. They are not disturbed by what happens around them. They live in society, and perform all their social duties, yet their reason always abides in the world of its thought, enraptured in the joy and tranquillity of their soul. They do not seek happiness outside themselves; it is there in their heart. Their virtue is its own end. They are indifferent to friends when they desert them, to wealth if it forsakes them. They are content with as much share in material goods as is indispensable for their continued existence.⁵⁸

This does not mean that Miskawaih's perfect man is either inactive or indifferent to society, even less a secluded hermit. On the contrary his ideal man is most active, ceaselessly striving after his own perfection, the perfection of his family and of society at large.⁵⁹ He longs for the company of pure souls, friendship is an enviable virtue for him. In Miskawaih's ideal man the neo-Platonic indifference to society is replaced by an Aristotelian ideal of active social life. This according to him is the spirit and the import of the Islamic *Sharī'ah*.⁶⁰ The ideal man has an ardent love for the next life which is fuller and more complete.⁶¹ He

may fully respond to the fervent appeal of Plotinus: "Let us fly to our dear, our true, father land..... Let us leave such vain means aside for seeing our dear father land again; we have but to close our bodily eyes and open the eyes of the spirit." (Enneads I, VI, 8)

Those who reach the acme of sa'adah are either philosophers, or prophets or the *imāms*.⁶² This is too high an ideal for a common man. The majority of human beings cannot aspire for it. Only a few extraordinarily gifted persons can rise to its gigantic heights, and they, too, not without Divine grace.

SA'ADAH OF THE COMMON MAN

The majority of people, however, are not completely deprived of sa'adah. Their lot is the proximate sa'adah,⁶³ and that is a common attainment. Moral perfection, or virtue is a social enterprise. Everyone has to do his best for its realization, and thus is able to share the collective achievement, which is not possible by individual efforts alone. Extending the idea of sa'adah Miskawaih presents the concept of special sa'adāt, relative to professions, classes and vocations in society.⁶⁴ By realising their special sa'adah most suited to them, they in fact achieve the whole of sa'adah. Sa'adah is a collective affair.⁶⁵

Sa'adah can only be achieved through wisdom of which the majority of people possess only a meagre portion. They cannot be expected to acquire wisdom by their own effort by which they may rise to a higher level of sa'adah. This drawback can, however, be partly removed through the co-operation of the higher sectors of society. They can provide them with necessary knowledge and instruct them in wisdom. They can rid them of their evil habits, remedy their diseases, and develop their virtues.

But why should society undertake this onerous task? That is, what is the basis of obligation for wise men to educate the majority? Miskawaih's answer is that it is the demand of social co-operation which makes possible the existence and perfection of wise men. It is the demand of the reciprocal nature of justice that the majority must be in turn assisted in achieving their sa'adah. Thus the social co-operation makes possible the realization of those goods and the attainment of those perfections which cannot be achieved by the majority of people in their individual capacities.

CHAPTER V

Virtue

WE have discussed sa'ādah in general, more particularly the ultimate sa'ādah. So far only an introductory treatment of the proximate or moral sa'ādah has been offered. We shall now proceed to discuss it in detail. What is moral sa'ādah, or what does it consist in? Miskawaih's answer is that it consists in virtue or virtuous character. Our inquiry consequently should begin with character.

CHARACTER

Miskawaih defines character (*khulq*) as "a state (*ḥāl*) of the soul which enables it to perform its actions without any reflection or deliberation."¹ By a state of the soul Miskawaih does not mean a transient condition of mind. It is a relatively permanent disposition, or a settled way of behaviour.² He also uses sometimes words like *haiyah*,³ *saj'iyah*⁴ and *malakah*,⁵ to emphasise the same aspect of stability and permanence. To qualify *ḥāl* with any such word as *rāsikhah* (rooted or established) as al-Chazālī does,⁶ appears to him to be unnecessary. Al-Ṭūsī and al-Dawwānī prefer the use of *malakah* instead of *ḥāl* which they explain as a *kai'iyah* (a state) of the soul that has a tendency to persist, while they consider *ḥāl* as a condition of the mind that is easy to change.⁷ Al-Dawwānī quotes al-Ṭūsī's definition of character as 'a *malakah* of the soul from which actions proceed without any reflection or deliberation' and he says that *malakah* is a *kai'iyah* that is rooted in the soul.⁸ Although these qualifications or definitions make no significant addition, yet in precision they certainly make an improvement over Miskawaih's definition.

By a state of the soul is meant neither emotion nor feeling. An emotion is involuntary and consequently it is neither virtuous nor vicious. Feeling in itself is neither good nor bad since it is not acquired. It is amoral. Character is acquired, and is the product of will and habituation. Emotion is a passing state of the mind, a momentary stirring of the soul, while character is a permanent disposition.

Neither is character a faculty, because a faculty is innate, while

character is acquired. Character is either good or bad, faculty is neither. One who has the power and knowledge of the good has the power and knowledge of the evil also, but he who chooses one character cannot simultaneously choose the opposite.

Character may also be distinguished from action. Character, as the definition shows, is the internal state of the soul, while action is its external manifestation. One is the inner spring or cause while the other is the outward expression or effect. Good actions come from good characters, evil actions from bad characters. As such it is character which is primarily the object of moral judgment. Praise or blame is to be directed properly to character and not to action.⁹ Any random action may be right but it does not deserve full approbation unless it is the expression of the inner character. Occasional actions have little moral value, they are momentary expressions, consequently they have no significance. For example, if after being stirred by a strong appeal one shows some benevolence and then lapses into selfishness, his generosity deserves no approbation. Taken in isolation, actions are not the proper objects of moral judgment. They have their moral value only as the expression of the character from which they proceed.¹⁰ It follows as a corollary from this view that if in any situation a particular character does not find expression in action, it does not thereby cease to exist, or turn into its opposite. If a generous man fails to do a generous act in a particular situation, he does not thereby become miserly.

The actions which proceed from a character do not involve fresh thinking or deliberate choice. They are spontaneous reactions. Benevolence, for instance, is a spontaneous outflow of sympathy from a benevolent character, it is the inner urge become manifest. It needs no constraining consciousness of duty, nor any mathematical calculation of consequences. What is emphasised is that an action deserves full moral approbation when, as a result of constant practice in similar situations, it becomes a habit and needs no further effort of the will to produce it. That is, it becomes a settled disposition or a second nature. Far from precluding thinking or deliberate choice, character is the product of repeated acts of reflection and deliberation. A character gives rise to those actions the like of which have been repeatedly willed in the past in order to form that character. Character is the cause as well as the effect of action.

IS CHARACTER NATURAL ?

Is character natural ? Is it completely determined by nature, and

as such is it unalterable? Some philosophers, Miskawaih says, hold that character is natural and it is impossible for it to be changed or exterminated. Others believe that no character is natural, neither is it unnatural. Men are born with different potentialities and tendencies that are later developed into characters. Characters are not formed and finished products of nature, they take their shape by education, training and habituation. "This second view", Miskawaih says, "we adopt, because it is our common observation. Moreover, the first view leads to the negation of all powers of discrimination and deliberation. It takes away the justification for the punishment of criminals, or for any attempt at reform. It implies the abandonment of all training and education of young men and children. It means to provide a general justification for every evil or shameful act, thus leading to complete anarchy. If we adopt the first view the Sharī'ah becomes worthless, and prophecy an absurd idea."¹¹

Miskawaih rejects the Stoic doctrine that all men are by nature good, and it is society which makes them bad.¹² He has likewise no sympathy with the opposite view that men are born evil and become good only through education and punishment.¹³ Galen, says Miskawaih, took the middle course. He believed that some persons were born good, who never became bad. They were few. Others were born evil and never became good, and such were many. And there were those who were neither good nor bad by nature, but the social conditions made them either good or bad.¹⁴ Aristotle held that men were capable of changing their character, though every one could not do so in equal measure. Some might modify their character with comparative ease and in a shorter time, while others might find it more difficult and take longer time. However, character could be wholly or partly changed, early or late. And whatever was changeable could not be natural, since what was natural did not change. In short, no character was natural. This conclusion of Aristotle is fully endorsed by Miskawaih.¹⁵

But to say that no character is natural does not mean that character has no basis in nature. In fact there can be no character which is not rooted in natural endowment. Occasional acts of bravery, for instance, may be performed by a man who has no natural aptitudes and dispositions for courage. But bravery cannot form a permanent constituent of his character.¹⁶ There can be no denying the fact that certain tendencies and potentialities are manifest even in the early years of childhood, but they are not characters or settled ways of behaviour. They are raw materials, so to say, and not finished products. They have to

be moulded and cast into set and definite patterns by subsequent education and habituation. To a certain extent we may be justified in speaking of natural character, if by this term we mean a pattern of behaviour which is expressive of natural disposition, and in which natural capacities find their fuller realization and development. A mode of behaviour not deeply rooted in personality and little expressive of natural capacities may likewise be called unnatural.

It is in this sense that Miskawaih divides character into natural and acquired.¹⁷ These categories are by no means mutually exclusive. They only signify the predominance of the role of either nature or habit in the formation of character. Every character is both natural and acquired, though certainly the part played by these two factors varies with individuals. A character can be called natural if the role of nature in its formation is more conspicuous, and acquired if habit is predominant. Miskawaih has very succinctly stressed these points: "No character in man is natural, neither is it unnatural."¹⁸ Or as Aristotle has summed up his view: "The moral virtues then, are produced in us neither by nature nor against nature. Nature, indeed, prepares in us the ground for their reception, but their complete formation is the product of habit."¹⁹

In the light of this discussion it would be surprising to note that De Boer²⁰ and following him Aḥmad Amīn²¹ and others believe that Miskawaih adopts Galen's view, namely, that few men are born good and never become bad, a number of men are born evil and never become good, and the rest become good or bad under the impact of their social environment and training. This opinion is quite unwarranted. The misconception arises from Miskawaih's presentation of Galen's view, but this cannot serve as a sufficient ground for a speculation of which explicit statements are available to the contrary effect. Moreover, just after presenting Galen's view, Miskawaih goes on to analyse Aristotle's arguments, which he concludes as finally demonstrated. He further adds that if Aristotle's view that character is changeable is not adopted, education, reformation, punishment, the Sharī'ah and prophecy will have no meaning.²²

Extreme divergence of natural abilities is found among individuals. This can be more clearly observed in children as the check and balance that is exercised by a grown up person in his behaviour is not found in their case. Under favourable conditions their natural disposition and aptitudes are sometimes distinctly developed in their early years, and traits like generosity or miserliness, sympathy or stone-heartedness, and

jealousy can be unmistakably observed.²³ Climatic conditions and hereditary factors also influence and modify natural potentialities. But the influence of the stars which is so decisive a factor in the formation of character for his contemporary Brethren of Sincerity is not countenanced by Miskawaih.

Although character begins to take shape in the very childhood, nevertheless from the point of view of moral evaluation it is not significant. For, the initiative in decisions and training is taken by the parents, and the child's will is under their direction. He is not fully conscious of the change, he can neither think of the goodness of any action, nor does he choose it on its own merits. It is only after his rational faculty has attained a certain degree of maturity, after his sense of discrimination between vice and virtue has become conscious and his actions have begun to proceed from deliberation, that his will becomes free in the true sense, and his choice can be said to be his own. Freedom of will in the sense of deliberate choice is the necessary prerequisite for the moral value of character.²⁴ Character is virtuous or vicious in the perfect sense only if it is the result of deliberate choice and action.

VIRTUE

Character is the seat of virtue. Virtue is not action, faculty, or emotion, but a settled disposition, a quality of mind, a permanent state of the soul, in short, a character. So far the object of virtue has been located. Now we have to ask what is in a character that makes it virtuous? To express this in Aristotelian terminology, we have found the genus of virtue (viz., character), now its differentia are to be discovered.

But to get at a definition of virtue is difficult. For, Miskawaih has nowhere attempted any thing of this sort, as he has done in the case of character. Another difficulty that one has to face in formulating his view regarding virtue arises from his effort to work out a synthesis between the Platonic conception of virtue which is based upon the tripartite division of the soul and the Aristotelian idea which places the differentia of virtue in the mean. To this combination of the Platonic and Aristotelian views Miskawaih was perhaps led by the so-called Aristotelian treatise 'On Virtues and Vices,' which drawing upon the Platonic division of the soul attributes different virtues to its parts and describes virtue as a state producing orderliness or harmony in the soul.²⁵

As noted above, Miskawaih, following Plato, distinguishes three faculties of the soul: the rational, the spirited and the appetitive. Each

faculty has its own virtue or excellence or perfection. Wisdom is the virtue of the rational soul, courage of the spirited and purity of the appetitive. We have the virtue of Wisdom (*al-ḥikmah*) when the rational soul functions with moderation, does not overreach its own self, and has all its desires focussed on understanding true sciences. As a result of this understanding it is also able to determine that which ought to be done, and that which must be avoided.²⁶ We have the virtue of Courage (*al-shajā'ah*) when the spirited soul functions with moderation, and obeys willingly what the rational soul deems fit for it,²⁷ and the virtue of Purity (*al-'iffah*) when the appetitive soul functions with moderation and obeys the rational soul without refusing anything that it pronounces to be right for it.²⁸ And when all the three virtues are obtained in the soul, that is, when all the faculties of the soul function with moderation and in mutual harmony, surrendering themselves willingly to reason, we have the virtue of Justice (*al-'adālah*).²⁹

These definitions clearly show that Miskawaih's fundamental approach to virtue is Platonic. Virtue is conceived of as the perfection of the various faculties of the soul, which is possible by their working with moderation (*i'tidāl*). We can, therefore, define virtue as that character of the soul which disposes it to work with moderation. Moderation is the condition of the harmonious working of all the faculties of the soul, in fact moderation and harmony go hand in hand. Harmony and moderation constitute the essence of virtue. This is sufficient for understanding the virtue of the rational soul. But in the case of the virtues of the spirited and the appetitive souls the definition contains another clause which enjoins that they should obey whatever is deemed right for them by the rational soul. Therefore, in their case the definition of virtue should be further qualified. It may be put as: Virtue is the character of the soul which disposes it to work with moderation and according to the dictates of reason. But in Miskawaih the working of the soul with moderation and according to the dictates of reason are not two distinct principles. Moderation is the quality of any action that is in accord with reason. Sometimes this quality is clearly perceived and needs no thinking or reflection as, for instance, in the case of spending money we immediately perceive what is extreme or moderate. But such situations are few, and hence the need of rational deliberation.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN

All this is so far perfectly Platonic. Now Miskawaih introduces

in the discussion of virtue the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean. He says that virtue is the mean between two extremes, which are vices.³⁰ By the mean he understands the avoidance of extremes in the exercise of emotions and impulses, or in the gratification of desires.³¹ Virtue consists in keeping to a position between deficiency and excess, between securing the maximum satisfaction of a desire and its total suppression. But to define the mean as the avoidance of extremes is to define it negatively. Moreover, there can be more than one such means between two extremes. What we have determined is only a range, and any point within this range can equally claim to be the right mean. The question is : What is the right mean and how can it be determined ?

To make this point clear Miskawaih presents the illustration of a circle.³² As the centre is the farthest point from both the ends of a diameter, so is virtue farthest removed from the extremes of vice. The emphasis is on the point that the distance between vice and virtue is greatest. Again, as the centre of a circle is only one point that can be definitely known against the various points in the circle whose place is not definite or fixed, so the right mean is one in any disposition, or action, and can be definitely determined as against the vices on either side of virtue, which lie at various distances and in different directions, and therefore cannot be definitely determined. A virtue has in fact many opposite vices.³³

This is the idea which Miskawaih wants to convey through the illustration of the circle. It should never be taken to mean that the right mean represented by the centre places virtue at equal distance from both the vicious extremes. His conception of the mean is not arithmetical as some writers have wrongly inferred,³⁴ although his illustration easily lends itself to this inference which would have been justified if Miskawaih had not given an explicit exposition of his view. Just after giving this illustration he says that the conception of the mean is no more than a principle for general guidance, it is not a formula for precise determination. He is fully conscious that the complete determination of the right mean can never be possible by any general principle. A moralist can only provide a principle for general guidance,³⁵ he can not give a mathematical formula. The determination of the right mean in any particular case is an individual affair.³⁶ Morality is more an art than a science, and like every art it does not admit of scientific precision and exactness. The precise determination of the right mean is the work of moral insight which is obviously an individual matter.³⁷ It resembles the skill of an artist. A goldsmith, for instance, knows the form of a ring

or a crown in general, and whenever he wants to make a particular ring or crown he is guided by the general rules of its form. But much depends on the skill he possesses. Besides, he has to take into consideration a great many details of that particular case—the amount of gold, the man and his tastes for whom it is prepared and the other particulars of the situation.³⁸ The same is the case with the art of morality. The mean is a formal principle, which when fully grasped may help a person in deciding to some extent about the path of virtue in particular cases. But here, too, his success mostly depends on the moral insight which he develops in acting morally. Again like the goldsmith, he should also take into account the particulars of the situation.³⁹

This analogy of the goldsmith very clearly brings out the importance of moral insight in the act of virtue. Generally in every art what is more important is not the knowledge of forms, or of the particular details of a certain case, but the skill of the artist and his artistic insight. The more developed his skill the easier his performance and the better his production. Again, his skill is not the product of theoretical knowledge, it is the result of practice. One may say that skill in a sense is its own product. Likewise, besides the theoretical conception of the mean and the knowledge of the situation, a person needs moral insight to guide him in striking the right mean in that situation. This moral insight is a product of habit. It is by constantly acting morally that one is better capable of acting morally.

Miskawaih's conception of the mean, therefore, is far from being arithmetical. He even goes on to show that sometimes the mean is nearer one or the other extreme. In certain cases to move away from the mean to one side or the other is more commendable. For example, a little more of generosity, provided it does not lead to prodigality is more desirable than any decrease in it. On the other hand, a little more towards the side of deficiency from the mean in purity (*'iffah*) is more praiseworthy.⁴⁰

Miskawaih's mean is more flexible than the common connotation of the term may suggest. He is fully conscious of the fact that morality is related to actions which cannot be considered apart from their context, apart from the real existing situations in time and space. This explains why, while emphasising the quality of the mean as a necessary constituent of virtue, he adds that the action should also be done at the right time and place, in the right amount or measure, to the right person or persons and in the right manner.⁴¹ In short, every thing that is relevant to the action should also be right according to the dictates of reason. Reason and moral insight are not two different things. Moral insight is a particular applica-

tion of reason. It is practical reason judging what is right or good. Therefore, the ascertainment of the right mean as well as the determination of the right time, place, person etc., is the work of the same reason.

In order to form a clear view of the range of application of his doctrine of the mean let us consider some of the typical virtues that Miskawaih has mentioned.

- (1) Justice, he says, is a mean between depriving a person of what is rightly his and being deprived of what is rightly one's own (*ẓulm* and *inẓilām*).⁴²
- (2) To return good for evil is a form of justice.⁴³
- (3) Love (*ulfah*) is also classed under justice.⁴⁴
- (4) Courage is a mean between cowardice and rashness, while cowardice means fearing where one should not fear, and rashness not fearing what in fact ought to be feared.⁴⁵
- (5) Remembrance (*dhikr*) is a virtue between forgetting (*nisyān*) that which ought to be forgotten, and attention (*'ināyah*) to that which should not be remembered.⁴⁶

The doctrine of the mean, it may be admitted, is successfully applicable in the case of (1) justice. But once defining justice as the mean between *ẓulm* and *inẓilām* it is difficult to understand how the returning of good for evil (2) is a form of justice. The same difficulty is faced in the case of *tafaḍḍul*,⁴⁷ that is, giving more than what is just and due. Apparently in the exchange of goods the mean is to pay just what is due, neither more nor less. This is justice. *Tafaḍḍul* is obviously not the mean. But it is undoubtedly a recognized virtue. Miskawaih's solution of this difficulty is not at all convincing. He justifies *tafaḍḍul* on the ground of precaution. It is safer, he says, that one should give more than what is just and due since the actual mean is often hard to ascertain. But to reduce *tafaḍḍul* to a kind of precautionary measure is to rob it of all moral significance. We do not perform *tafaḍḍul* for the sake of precaution but because we believe it to be a positive virtue in itself, nay, a virtue of the highest order. We practise it even when all the limits of precaution have already been crossed.

It is not quite clear how (3) love can be classed under justice. This illustrates the example of forcibly fitting a fact into a preconceived theoretical framework.

Courage (4) is said to be the mean between cowardice and rashness, which have been interpreted in terms of deficiency or excess of fear. In fact it is not one emotion that is involved here but two. Cowardice is excess of fear with little self-confidence, while rashness is over-confidence

with the least sense of fear. The brave man will be correctly disposed in regard to both. Thus there are not two faulty extremes but four, which are not invariably joined in two pairs.⁴⁸ A person may be rightly confident of his own abilities, yet he may also fear the dangers in the situation. Again, the difference between rashness and bravery is not one of magnitude. True bravery displays the same amount of fear as rashness. The difference is one of kind, not of degree. Looking from the angle of magnitude both bravery and rashness are extremes. What distinguishes them is the moral quality of the action. If the venture is right, extreme display of courage is bravery, if wrong, it is foolhardiness.⁴⁹ The fundamental mistake lies in applying the notion of magnitude in making distinctions of moral qualities.

The example of (5) *dhikr* (remembrance) illustrates the failure in distinguishing clearly between a psychological phenomenon and a moral one. Remembrance is remembrance whether it is of things worth remembering or not. To consider remembrance as a moral virtue is a confusion of psychology with ethics. Moreover the doctrine of the mean is not applicable in this case. Remembrance is opposed to forgetting, not to attention, and is therefore not a mean.

Finally some of the time-honoured virtues and vices have not been mentioned by Miskawaih, perhaps because it is not clear how the doctrine of the mean can be applied to them. For example, veracity and falsehood have not been mentioned anywhere. 'The readiness to apply the doctrine of the mean could sometimes lead Aristotle to such eccentricities as that of making simple veracity a mean between boastfulness and mock modesty.'⁵⁰ Miskawaih has taken the better course of quietly ignoring such cases.

We may conclude that the notion of the mean is applicable to a far narrow range of virtues than it was visualised by Miskawaih. The next question to be asked is: Does the conception of the mean fully explain the difference between virtue and vice, or does it constitute the differentia of virtue, in cases where it is applicable? The answer is that it does not. We have already pointed out that the mean is a quantitative idea, and is quite inadequate for explaining the vast difference that lies between virtue and vice. Moreover, it obscures the idea of duty or obligation that is essential to virtue. Kant's criticism on this point of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean is perfectly justified.⁵¹ With regard to the objection that the doctrine of the mean furnishes no criterion for deciding about the right course of action in a particular situation, it may be said that the objection is out of place. Neither Aristotle nor Miskawaih supposes that

in deciding what is right on a certain occasion the knowledge of the theory of the mean is sufficient. Had it been so they would have never emphasised the role of moral insight, as we have seen above.

To sum up : The notion of the mean is not equally applicable to all virtues. It neither explains the nature of virtue nor does it provide a sufficient criterion for deciding about the rightness of particular actions. The truth of the doctrine, however, lies in its emphasis that the secret of moral life lies in the harmonious development of the whole personality—an ideal which cannot be attained without keeping all the faculties of the soul within their proper limits, and observing moderation in their exercise and satisfaction. Although the doctrine has also been applied to particular actions, but its proper and primary object is disposition or character.⁵² The doctrine has not been expounded either to provide a criterion of right action or to account for the nature of virtue, but to give a general rule for better moral life.

It should be recalled that the doctrine does not enter into Miskawaih's original conception of virtue. He conceives virtue as the harmonious working of the soul under the guidance of reason. It is only later when he tries to classify various vices that he first introduces the idea of the mean.⁵³ One cannot help thinking that the doctrine of the mean in Miskawaih's system is more a device to deduce vice than to define virtue.

The above discussion fully brings out the supreme role of moral insight or wisdom in the determination of the right action or virtue. Socrates was right in emphasising that knowledge is virtue. Although this doctrine was subsequently modified by Plato but the basic idea that wisdom constitutes the difference between virtue and vice was fully subscribed to by him. This enabled him to maintain the essential unity of virtue which was identified with wisdom.⁵⁴ Miskawaih also subscribes to this idea. Courage is impossible without wisdom, so is purity. Nay, wisdom enters into them as a constituent factor, and in its completest form includes them all. And this state of the soul is what constitutes justice. "Every brave and temperate man is also wise," says Miskawaih, "and every wise man is brave and temperate as well."⁵⁵ The unity of virtue, however, is not arithmetical but organic, a unity in diversity as the soul is a unity in diversity.

THE PLACE OF MOTIVE

In the detailed treatment of virtue, as we shall see, Miskawaih emphasises the purity of motive. Virtue, he says, is an end in itself. It

must be sought for its own sake. If pursued for anything else, for instance, wealth, honour, or the avoidance of fear or disapproval, virtue loses its moral worth. It ceases to be virtue. This emphasis on making virtue its own end, however, does not exclude the consideration of the consequences of an act, which, as we have noted, are sufficiently provided for in such qualifications as the right time, the right place and the right person etc. It may be noted that the elevation of virtue to an end in itself invests morality with an independence and raises it to a position that can hardly be allowed by Miskawaih's formal theory which makes morality subservient to philosophy. This point seems to have been lost sight of by him as well as by Aristotle.⁵⁶ Among the motives of virtue Miskawaih also mentions the desire for the pleasure of God. In fact he does not make any difference between virtue for its own sake and virtue for the pleasure of God.⁵⁷ However, the latter is not so conspicuous as it is in the moral life of the *ṣūfīs*. In this respect Miskawaih clearly goes beyond Aristotle. For Aristotle the right principles of morality are only perceived by wise men; and the common man is to imitate and obey them. In Miskawaih the Islamic *Sharī'ah* takes the place of the wise men, and the majority is asked to follow its rules and observe its regulations.⁵⁸ This makes the pleasure of God immediately relevant in the pursuit of virtue and right action and thus produces great difference between the views of Aristotle and Miskawaih.

Miskawaih does not introduce pleasure either in the determination of virtue or in its realization. Pleasure does not affect the motive of the virtuous man, nor does it form any part of virtue. It is only a concomitant of virtuous activity, virtue sought in the right spirit provides the purest pleasure. Pleasure, as Aristotle would say, is the sign of virtuous activity. Virtue is an art, and like every beautiful piece of art it gives that sublime pleasure that is the good fortune of an artist. The pursuit of virtue, therefore, is not a cold and dispassionate endeavour. On the contrary a life of virtue is full of delight and love.

One defect in Aristotle's treatment of virtue which strikes a modern reader is that benevolence is not recognised except obscurely in the imperfect form of liberality.⁵⁹ Miskawaih's conception of virtue is free from this defect. For him the basis of human relations is not only the selfish pursuit of one's own desires and needs, but also a genuine love of fellow-beings, which is an essential element of human nature. We shall take up this point again in the discussion of love and friendship.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL

It has been emphasised that virtue is voluntary. Acts are virtuous in the true sense only when they proceed from a will that is free and that obeys the judgment of reason. Now the question is : If virtue is voluntary and a virtuous man practises it consciously for its own sake, or for public approval, is it also that vice like virtue is voluntary ? Does a man commit vice knowing that it is vice ? Does he perform it for public disapprobation ? How can a man knowingly harm himself.

This is the way Miskawaih has posed the problem, admitting that it is a difficult one.⁶⁰ He says that philosophers have endeavoured to resolve this difficulty convincingly. He, however, offers his own solution. But in spite of his claim, there is nothing original in it, he has presented the solution offered by the philosophers in his own way. It is briefly this.

On occasions of extreme excitement our desires cloud our judgment. In the heat of passion we imagine an act right which on cool deliberation we find wrong. Often desires are so overwhelming that we do not even consult our reason and act on the spur of the moment without any deliberation. Whatever may be the case it is at least certain, says Miskawaih, that no body harms himself knowingly.⁶¹

This view is fundamentally the same which Plato and Aristotle held. And like them he also fails to solve the problem. Though he is a firm believer in the freedom of the will, and tries to save moral responsibility, his psychology does not allow him to maintain his belief successfully. The only states of mind which he recognises as immediate antecedents of evil acts are (1) mistaken choice of evil under the appearance of good, or (2) predominance of irrational impulse overpowering rational judgment or conducive to action without deliberation.⁶² Whether it is momentary ignorance, or suspension of rational thinking, in either case the action according to him seems to be necessitated. So long as he identifies free will with rational thinking, and recognises freedom of will only when it is rational, he is compelled to accept the acts proceeding from the state of ignorance or non-deliberation to be necessitated. And since these are the only antecedent states of an evil act, he also fails to fix the responsibility for the act on the doer. In case a person performs a wrong action, mistaking it to be right, he cannot be morally responsible, since he did not intend the wrong consciously. And in case the passions are so overpowering that he does it without deliberation, the responsibility for it cannot be placed on him. In fact acts not preceded by rational deliberation are amoral, and as such are not the proper

objects of moral judgment. Unless he allows that men commit evil knowingly, he cannot hold them responsible for their acts. He rightly acquits one who has done wrong under compulsion or duress, or quite accidentally against his intention. But he cannot fix the responsibility on him who is swayed by his anger, or on him who is overpowered by his passions. To say that the drunkard and the angry are responsible for whatever evil they do, and on that account deserve reproach and punishment, since to enter such a state is their own act,⁶³ cannot resolve the difficulty unless Miskawaih recognises that they enter into such a state knowing that they may commit wrongs that will be ultimately harmful for them and that they consciously choose this course. And this is what Miskawaih failed to realise.

But though he could not succeed in proving the voluntariness of evil, we will not be justified in denying his belief in the freedom of the will and in the individual's responsibility for his actions. What we can finally say is that like Plato and Aristotle he was also ignorant of the dilemma in which his psychology landed him.

CHAPTER VI

Cardinal Virtues

MISKAWAIH'S basic conception of virtue is, as we have seen, Platonic. He deduces the four cardinal virtues—wisdom, courage, temperance and justice—from the three faculties of the soul. Every cardinal virtue has been conceived of in terms of perfection or realization of the distinctive function of the corresponding faculty through the observance of moderation in its working and of harmony with other faculties under the guidance of reason. The state of the entire soul resulting from their combination is what constitutes justice. At this point the notion of the mean has been introduced in order to make the conception of moderation more precise.

Virtue is thus described as the mean between the two undesirable extreme of excess and deficiency. It is this blend of Platonism and Aristotelianism that is the characteristic feature of Miskawaih's conception of virtue. We have already noted all the significant elements in his conception of virtue in general. In the following study of individual virtues we shall see all these formal elements fully exemplified. Now that the significance and use of the doctrine of the mean has been discussed in principle, we are in a better position to evaluate it.

But the important thing in this treatment is not the formal aspect. What we intend to study is the content or the matter of particular virtues, the extent to which they differ from the earlier Greek conceptions, and the improvement, if any, they make on the original. It is in the content and not in the form that the influence of the changed conditions of the time and the new ideal and cultural background is most evident. The list of virtues that have been mentioned in Miskawaih's treatise is quite comprehensive. All of them have been divided into four categories, and placed under one of the four cardinal virtues on the general assumption that the relation of each virtue under a category to the relevant cardinal virtue is one of an species to its genus. We shall now investigate the precise nature of this relation.

The order that Miskawaih follows in the treatment of cardinal virtues is as follows : He begins with wisdom, then takes up courage and

temperance and finally discusses justice at length. We shall maintain the same order except in the case of wisdom, which we propose to discuss just before justice.

COURAGE (*Al-Shajā'ah*)

Courage (*Shajā'ah*) is the virtue of the spirited soul (*al-Nafs al-Ghaḍabīyah*). By the spirited soul Miskawaih means that faculty of the soul which expresses itself in anger, displays vigour and energy in pursuits, ventures in dangers, and strives for domination, promotion and varieties of honour.¹ From this description it is clear that the activity of the spirited soul is not confined to situations which involve risk, danger or fear. Fear is only one of the factors which actuate the spirited soul, and not even the primary one. The basic factor to energise it is the desire for some end that is higher than those which energise the appetitive soul, for instance, honour, domination etc. Further, it is not necessary that the end should involve danger, although higher ends are not commonly attained without some risk and danger. Anger is the expression of the spirited soul, and is shown in various situations different from fear, for example when one's self-respect is hurt or any noble cause is thwarted.²

This spirited soul is, as Plato believed, a natural ally of reason against the appetitive. It assists the rational soul in subjugating lower desires, and in keeping them within bounds, lest they should grow strong, dominate reason and enslave it.³ Miskawaih, however, does not use the analogue of the soldier-class within the state to determine the function of the spirited soul. This enables him to form a conception of the spirited soul in which peace-time objectives assume greater prominence than objectives in time of war.

Although courage is the characteristic virtue of the spirited soul, yet all its activities are not courage. Courage consists in the moderate and harmonious working of the spirited soul, and manifests itself when it performs its own functions without transgressing on the functions of other souls and willingly obeys the rational or discriminating soul concerning what it prescribes right or wrong for it.⁴ A truly brave act is right, right in the context of the time and situation it occurs in, right in proportion and measure, and directed to the right object or person.⁵ Courage is governed by the right principle, it partakes of and is implied in wisdom. Wisdom enters into it as an essential element. There can be no courage without wisdom.⁶ A brave act must also be done in the right frame of

mind. It should be chosen for its own sake. A brave man performs courageous acts, because they are the expressions of his nature, the realization of his self, of his own perfection.⁷

Like Aristotle Miskawaih does not distinguish between civilian and military courage. Both are noble, both may put severe demands on the powers and life of the agent, and both may equally shine. His emphasis is not on any particular form of courage, but on the nobility of the cause and the purity of motive actuating the individual. Those who defend their religion or their belief in the unity of God, strive for the rule of the Sharī'ah or struggle in the path of God, dedicate themselves to the service of humanity in peace or war are equally commendable. *Jehād* in its widest sense of struggle for the good and the holy represents the noblest expression of courage.⁸

Those acts of bravery which arise from compulsion or a desire to escape shame, which are prompted by the hope of some gain either in the shape of money, honour or love, and which occur because of one's familiarity with terrible objects and situations, are not true acts of courage.⁹ This last point is worth noting. No doubt true bravery is the outcome of natural love of courage, but it does not mean that a brave man does not experience any feeling of fear in terrifying situations. On the contrary he does experience such a feeling, but his reaction to terrifying situations is quite unlike the reaction of a coward. Such situations spur him to acts of courage. Not only does he experience fear, but to a certain extent fear is a necessary condition of genuine human courage. Complete absence of fear is the mark of animal courage. The courage of a lion is unmixed with fear, it is instinctive. Human courage is not without a prior feeling of fear, but it is in spite of fear.¹⁰ Insensibility to fear is a disease not a virtue. In this view of human courage Miskawaih betrays more the influence of *Magna Moralia* than that of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.¹¹

True courage should also be distinguished from rashness which though human is yet blind, blind to the time and place and to the object or man towards whom it is directed. It would be sheer foolhardiness, for instance, if any ordinary person marched against the congregated might of a king. Likewise, courage is to be distinguished from cowardice. Cowardice is lack or deficiency of courage where it is demanded by reason. True courage is thus the mean between rashness and cowardice.¹²

To seek revenge is human. It does not run counter to courage, but it must be governed by the same conditions that are essential to true courage. On certain occasions wreaking vengeance becomes necessary.

He who shuns avenging himself in all circumstances may debase and humiliate himself.¹³

True to the Islamic spirit Miskawaih does not consider suicide either good or as an act of courage. One who is driven to suicide by poverty, misery or any other cause is in fact a coward. Suicide is the expression of cowardice and not of courage which means unlimited endurance and fortitude.¹⁴

Bravery is its own reward. A brave man experiences spiritual happiness which is his due. This pleasure, however, does not occur in the beginning of the act which is commonly painful, but on its completion. The intensity of the pleasure depends on the nobility or goodness of the end which prompts the performance of the act and on the situation in which it is performed.

To sum up : A truly brave man scorns difficulties and hardships encountered in the pursuit of noble ends, stands firm in danger, does not shrink from taking the greatest risk, staking even his life. He has no regrets for what is beyond his reach, nor is he harassed when calamities assail him. His ambitions are high and noble, his spirit undaunted, and his struggle for the better and the higher objects never-ending. His spirit is never energised except in the right measure, at the right time and in the right situation.¹⁵

The virtues which Miskawaih mentions under courage are :¹⁶

Kibr al-Nafs—Great-souledness. It consists in looking down on the easy and the mediocre, and striving always for higher and higher ends, with the determination to bear every hardship of the way.

Al-Najdah—Self-reliance in the face of danger without being in the least perturbed or troubled.

‘Azim al-Himmah—High-mindedness, manifesting oneself in self-restraint in both prosperity and adversity.

Al-Thibāt—Firmness in meeting fear-inspiring situations.

Al-Ṣabr—Fortitude.

Al-Ḥilm—Forbearance, internal satisfaction that is not easily destroyed by provocation or excitation.

Al-Sukūn—Peace of the soul in battles fought in defence of life, family, the Sharī‘ah or any other noble cause.

Al-Shahāmah—Chivalry, leading to a striving after higher ends in expectation of achieving a good name.

Iḥtimāl al-Kadd—Physical exertion for the achievement of moral ideals.

All these virtues have been almost completely reproduced by later writers

like Naṣīruddīn Ṭūsī and Jalāluddīn Dawwānī except for the important omission of *Al-Ṣabr*. They have added modesty, indignation and sympathy to this list.¹⁷ Al-Ghazālī¹⁸ both adds to, and subtracts from, the above list. Miskawaih does not mention those vices which fall on the either extreme of these virtues. This task he leaves to the reader.

The relation of these virtues to courage is held to be one of species to their genus.¹⁹ A glance at them would show that they are manifestations of courage in different internal stimulations or external situations, in misery or in felicity, in discard and war, in fear and danger, in provocation and excitement, in hardships and calamities, in struggle and exertion, and above all in the never-ending pursuit of the good and the holy.

All critics agree that the Greek conception of courage is narrow. Although it is not actually limited to war, yet in both Plato and Aristotle the type of true courage is to be soldier's on the battle field.²⁰ "The noblest death," says Aristotle, "is the soldier's for he meets it in the midst of the greatest and most glorious dangers".²¹

Miskawaih's conception of courage differs from the Greek conception in that it is more comprehensive. It includes all situations in peace and in war, in private and in public. Rather it is basically a virtue of peace time, and of the individual life. The soldier's courage is neither the noblest nor the most glorious. On the contrary, the struggle for a higher ideal leading to the patient facing of all hardships undaunted by fear, is the real essence of true courage. An imperceptible, but sustained and vigorous struggle for self-perfection or for the perfection of society is more glorious and noble than a brilliant but momentary courting of death. The cause of this difference lies in the changed conditions of the times, particularly of the ideological backgrounds. War in the Greek cities was the most important and glorious social enterprise, and almost all the free population, besides the slaves, had to take part in it. Some of the states were nothing less than military barracks in which men and women alike were trained as soldiers. The life of a Grecian was almost identified with society. For the Muslims in the tenth century, however, war was the concern of only a small section of the people, consequently the ideals of peace claimed greater attention. With the spread of Islamic ideology and values, the individual emerged into prominence. Purification of the soul, and the elevation of moral and spiritual life became more important. The mysticism that now became more prominent fostered the values of individualism, and intensified the trend towards inwardness. All these factors combined to shift the emphasis from war to peaceful pursuits, and the

energy of the spirited soul was directed into more constructive channels.

With the extension of the field of courage and the change in the relative importance of its various manifestations, we find a simultaneous deepening of the moral conscience and the progressive purification of motive. Social applause and even the love of young maidens that Plato's *Republic* recognises²² as one of the incentives to noble deeds and higher achievements in Greek life, lost their significance in Islam. The sense of virtue for its own sake became insistent. And the love of God's pleasure contributed further to the purification of motive. Miskawaih is not opposed to the mystic emphasis on the cultivation of the inner life. He is only against its isolationism.

TEMPERANCE (*al-ʿIffah*)

As courage is the virtue of the spirited soul, temperance is the virtue of the appetitive or the bestial soul. "When it functions in moderation, keeps within its proper limits, follows the dictates of reason and is not refractory, we have the virtue of *ʿiffah* (temperance)."²³ "*Aṭīf* (temperate) is the person who gratifies his desires in the right measure, in the right way, at the right time and in the right situation."²⁴

A truly temperate man is one whose appetites willingly submit to his reason, and the submission becomes part of his character. It is only when temperance springs from an inner urge or a love which has no object other than itself that it has moral value. That individual is not temperate who abstains temporarily from indulgence in drinking, eating or gratifying his desires in the expectation of greater gratification in future, because he is ignorant of the pleasure that the object may provide, because for the moment he does not feel any inclination towards it as he is already satiated, because he is incapable of excitation on account of any psychological or physiological inability, because he anticipates some evil consequences that may follow, or because he is checked or debarred from it.²⁵ Temperance presupposes the presence of desires, and the possibility of their gratification. It does not lie in complete annihilation of desire, which is a vice not a virtue. It is exercised in the face of every evil temptation, and inspite of all evil promptings. Temperance is thus a mean between greed, on the one hand, and annihilation of desire, on the other.²⁶

The manifestations of temperance are as follows :²⁷

Al-Ḥayāʾ — Bashfulness : The revulsion of the soul from committing evil because of its inherent hatefulness, and because it exposes one to

social disgrace.

Al-Di'ah—Self-composure : Calmness and composure in exciting situations.

Al-Ṣabr—Steadfastness : The quality of the soul that enables one to refuse to submit to temptation and gladly to suffer privation.

Al-Ḥurrīyah—Freedom from baser desires : Earning money by honest means and in noble ways, and spending it in proper channels.

Al-Qanū'ah—Being contented with a small and reasonable amount of food and clothing.

Al-Dimū hah—Preference for what is lovely, good and beautiful.

Al-Intiḏām—Orderliness : The state of the soul that manifests itself in properly conducting and rightly organising its behaviour.

Ḥusn al-Haḏya—Love of self-adornment, which contributes to the perfection of the soul.

Al-Musūlamah—Maintenance of cordial relations with fellow-beings, without experiencing any uneasiness.

Al-Waqār—Dignity : Observance of decorum and decency in various pursuits, and avoidance of indiscreet behaviour.

Al-Wara'—Consistent performance of noble and good acts, which perfect the soul.

Al-Sakhā'—Generosity : This consists in observing moderation in the exercise of charity, in spending on the right persons, on the right occasions, and in the right amount. It is a mean between prodigality and meanness. The former consists in spending money without any consideration of the right person, the right occasion, the right time or amount, and the latter in withholding money when it ought to be spent. Generosity is one of the most important virtues, and because of its great importance, Miskawaih has put it in a class by itself and has analysed it into a number of virtues as follows :²⁸

Al-Karam—To spend cheerfully large sums of money on beneficial objects, observing, however, the condition of moderation.

Al-Ithār—Abstinence from the satisfaction of one's rightful needs in order to help those whose needs are more pressing.

Al-Muwāsāt—Assistance to friends and deserving persons with money and other goods.

Al-Musāmaḥah—Voluntary giving up of one's rights in the interest of others.

Al-Samāḥah—To give more than what is due or obligatory.

Al-Nail—Feeling pleasure in higher acts of generosity, which becomes a permanent element of one's character.

All these virtues have been reproduced by later writers. To the list of virtues under generosity, Naṣīruddīn Ṭūṣī has added forgiveness (*'afwa*),²⁹ which is really an important addition. The omission of *'afwa* from Miskawaih's list, however, is partly compensated for by *al-Musāmaḥah*. The restraint that is shown in these manifestations of generosity is more Greek than Arabian.

If the virtues mentioned above are carefully studied, one cannot fail to admire the balance and sanity in Miskawaih's conception of temperance. There is no opposition to pleasure in general and no abstinence from material goods or articles for self-adornment. Rather, all these have been recommended in a reasonable amount. This relieves Miskawaih's conception of temperance of undesirable asceticism.

But when one examines the detailed rules of discipline and principles of juvenile training drawn up by him, one is surprised at their stringency and rigour, and at the ascetic ideal they are designed to inculcate. In Miskawaih's view a young child's food should be cut down to the bare level necessary for subsistence. It should be coarse, should have no variety and should not be chosen with the object of giving the child any pleasure. It should be administered only as a medicine to remove the pangs of hunger. Sweets and fruit should be banned, meat forbidden, and drink completely prohibited. The child should have the minimum of sleep and that too at night, never in day time. He should learn to exert himself to his utmost, and to be hardy and laborious. He should wear coarse clothes without any colours in them and should be made accustomed to all hardships, and so on.³⁰

The stringency of this ascetic ideal is, however, mitigated in the case of the grown-ups, who in their pursuit of a virtuous life are allowed something more than bare subsistence in food, clothing and other comforts.³¹

We have noted Miskawaih's wavering on the question of including pleasure in Sa'ādah. The same tendency manifests itself here also. On the one hand, he tries to be more balanced and realistic, on the other, he cannot completely give up the neo-Platonic dislike of the body or its comforts which was further accentuated by readings from Galen³² and Brison.³³ Miskawaih's own reaction against his early life of wanton pleasure also went to strengthen this ascetic attitude. An unconscious influence of mysticism³⁴ is also not a remote possibility.

Aristotle's area of temperance is limited to the pleasures of the body and among them it is further restricted to the pleasures of taste and touch. Even the former is finally excluded, and temperance is apparently

confined to a moderate degree of self-restraint against the allurements of the grosser sense.³⁵ But in Miskawaih we do not find any limitation of the area of operation of temperance. The terms *al-ḥayā*, *al-di'ah*, *al-dimāthah*, *al-waqār*, for instance, are quite general and unqualified. His conception of *'iffah* is, therefore, more comprehensive and more profound.

WISDOM (*al-Ḥikmah*)

"Al-Ḥikmah is the virtue of the rational and discriminatory soul, when it functions with moderation, does not overreach itself, and has all its energies directed towards understanding true sciences, (not imaginary, which in fact imply ignorance), we attain knowledge, and following it comes wisdom. Wisdom consists in understanding all that exists in its essential aspects. It consists, in other words, in understanding both that which is Divine, and that which is human. As a result of this understanding the wise man is able to know all that is knowable and all that ought to be done, as also all that should be avoided."³⁶

This definition is important in many respects. Firstly, it makes no sharp distinction between the theoretical and the practical (discriminatory) reason. Their functions are different but not unconnected. Wisdom is one whole, its bifurcation into theoretical and practical is more imaginary than real. Each involves the other in such a way that none can be conceived of apart from the other. Wisdom is knowledge in its widest sense; it is philosophy. The difference is only that it is knowledge as well as the state of the soul which possesses that knowledge. The excellence of a faculty and the expressions of that excellence are not two different things. Wisdom comprehends all that exists, divine or human, material or spiritual. The knowledge of the good and the evil is inseparably interwoven with the knowledge of things, the valuational with the factual. Rather, the knowledge of the right and the wrong, as the definition asserts, follows from the understanding of things in their essential aspect. From this view of wisdom it follows that the knowledge of the Real or the Good is essential for a true knowledge of the human good or *sa'adah*. Secondly, in the pursuit of virtue a consciousness of the Good is necessary. Virtue devoid of this absolute consciousness is, as Plato calls it, 'a mere shadow and in reality a slavish quality, with nothing sound or true about it.'³⁷ Since in Miskawaih the Good is completely identical with God, the knowledge of His Being is the pre-requisite for the knowledge of the good or *sa'adah*, and the consciousness of His pleasure is an integral element in the pursuit of virtue.³⁸

This conception of wisdom does not, however, repudiate the distinction that, following Aristotle, Miskawaih made between theoretical and practical wisdom. What it does repudiate is the independence and self-sufficiency of the practical wisdom from the theoretical, which Aristotle sought to establish. Consequently the independence that virtue seems to gain either in its determination or realization is done away with. In Miskawaih virtue is more closely related to philosophy than in Aristotle.

The virtues, which Miskawaih mentions under wisdom are :³⁹

Al-Dhakā'—Intelligence : Easy and quick derivation of results and conclusions. This does not necessarily mean syllogistic inference to which *al-Dawwānī* seems to restrict its scope.⁴⁰

Al-Dhikr—Memory : Preservation of ideas that the intellect or the opinion (*wahm*) extracts from objects and events. But Miskawaih's *dhikr* includes recollection also, which in fact is the literal meaning of the term. The two functions of memory and recollection have been distinguished by *al-Ṭūsī* and *al-Dawwānī* as *Taḥaffuẓ* and *Tadhakkur*.⁴¹

Al-Ta'aqqul—Intellection : Exact comprehension of objects as they are.

Ṣafā' al-Dhihn—Clarity of thought.

Ḥūdat al-Dhihn—Acuteness of mind in perceiving the implications of foregoing ideas and premises.

Sur'at al-Fahm—Quickness of understanding.

Suhūlat al-Ta'allum—Ability of the soul to acquire ideas easily.

While reflecting on these definitions what strikes a modern mind is their non-ethical nature. As powers or faculties they are ethically neutral. How then can they be called virtues ? In reply Miskawaih may point out that virtue is excellence or perfection, and therefore not necessarily an ethical concept.

But if this explanation is accepted Miskawaih's effort to prove these virtues as the means between different pairs of vices tumbles down. If they are ethically neutral they cannot be opposed to any vices. Neither the notion of the mean can be applied to them, nor can the pairs of vices be deduced from them. Intelligence, for instance, cannot be considered as the mean between cleverness and stupidity, if they are taken in their common non-ethical sense. This is why that to prove his thesis that virtue is the mean between two vicious extremes Miskawaih goes on to interpret cleverness and stupidity in an ethical sense⁴² as he has done in the case of *dhikr* (remembrance) and its opposite vices. The inapplicability of the doctrine of the mean is more obvious here than anywhere else.

What is the relation of these virtues to wisdom ? Obviously it is

not one of the species to their genus. Nor is it the relation of a thing to its manifestations as is the case with virtues listed under courage or temperance. Realising this difficulty Miskawaih suggests that the relation is one of means to an end.⁴³ This marks a further divergence from the original idea of species and genus relation.

JUSTICE (*al-ʿAdālah*)

Justice (*Al-ʿadālah*) is the most important of all virtues, and has received the most elaborate treatment by Miskawaih. Courage, temperance and wisdom are virtues of particular faculties of the soul, but justice is the virtue of the entire soul. Miskawaih defines justice as "the virtue of the soul obtained as a result of the combination of the three virtues discussed above." "That is", he explains, "it occurs when the different faculties of the soul perform their own functions with moderation, and work together in harmony, surrendering willingly to the discrimination without encroaching upon one another by pursuing ends contrary to their respective natures."⁴⁴ Justice is the combined result of courage, temperance and wisdom. All of them work in unison to produce justice. Justice is the consummation of the virtuous life, all other virtues find their completion in it.

But justice is not merely the outcome of their combination, it really constitutes them. The essential nature of virtue is moderation, harmony or *iʿtidāl*, it is this which distinguishes it from vice. And *iʿtidāl* and *ʿadālah*, derived from the same root, convey the same sense,⁴⁵ *ʿadālah* is moderation and harmony. All virtues, therefore, involve justice, which constitutes their very essence. Justice is the supreme virtue or *the* virtue, every other virtue is its manifestation. It is in fact the beginning as well as the end of all virtue. It is the whole of virtue.⁴⁶

Reason is the arbiter of harmony or proportion. It is through the exercise of wisdom or the moral insight that one acquires an understanding of moderation or the right mean. Since justice constitutes that very moderation or mean, wisdom is the determinant of justice. Rather, justice is what wisdom decides, it is the rule of reason. But like every other virtue wisdom is the manifestation, or the result of justice. Both, therefore, involve and determine each other.⁴⁷

Justice is the disposition of the soul which maintains moderation in the functioning of its various faculties, and observes harmony in their collective working always turning their activities from extremes of deficiency or excess to the mean, by co-ordinating them according to the right

principle.⁴⁸ It is this directing and controlling function of justice that led some thinkers to postulate a new faculty of the soul to which this task might be assigned. Al-Ghazālī, for instance, assumes besides the usual three powers, a fourth faculty of justice, the *qūwat al-ʿadl*.⁴⁹ His view of this power is one of an executive officer which enforces the rule of reason on other faculties. As a consequence of this view he confines the function of wisdom only to the perception of moderation or the right mean, and takes away that element from the appetitive and spirited souls which makes them willingly submit to the rule of reason. It is a basic idea of Platonic psychology that every faculty, though distinguished from and often opposed to another and to the rule of reason, has nevertheless an inner urge for moderation, harmony and obedience to reason, which urge is its real essence and nature. Virtue is, therefore, not the observance of an external rule, but the perfection of the true self, and the realization of the real essence. This is why Plato does not postulate any fourth faculty or power to enforce the rule of reason. True to the Platonic psychology Miskawaih considers justice as the perfection of the entire soul, achieved as a result of the perfection of all its faculties.

From the above analysis it is obvious that justice is not a composite virtue. It is simple and indivisible. It is related to other virtues, not as an aggregate to its discrete elements, but as a body to its various organs, or the soul to its faculties. It is a unity in multiplicity. As an organic whole is more than its parts, justice is more than the combination of courage, temperance and wisdom. In other words, it is more than the sum of all the different sub-virtues that we have already studied separately under the three cardinal virtues. So when Miskawaih goes on to enumerate a number of sub-virtues under justice he is perfectly right. Ibn Sīnā's objection to this enumeration is not justified in principle. He says that since justice is the combined result of courage, temperance and wisdom, it can have no separate sub-virtues except those which are already included in its parts.⁵⁰ This objection assumes that justice is an arithmetical aggregate, and therefore completely analysable into its constituent ingredients. But we have seen that justice is an organic whole and is consequently more than the combination of its various parts. It may have some manifestations which cannot be included under its parts.

The various manifestations of justice which Miskawaih has mentioned are mostly social or pertain to the exchange of benefits. For instance, *al-Mukāfāt*, i.e., return of benevolence in equal terms or with some addition; or *Ḥusn-al-Shirkah*, i.e., fairness in give and take and common

enterprises; or *Ḥusn al-Qaḍā'*, i.e., payment of remuneration without any grudge or without any thought of doing favour.⁵¹ These are obviously the various forms of justice. *Al-Ṣadāqah* (friendship), *al-Ulfah* (affection), *Ṣīlat al-Raḥm* (assistance to kinsmen and relatives) and *al-Tawaddud* (acquiring the love of equals or elders by pleasing manners and actions)⁵² have been considered as advanced forms of justice. But *Mukāfāt al-sharr bi'l-khair* (return of good for evil)⁵³ cannot be classed under justice. It appears that Miskawaih is prone to include under justice every virtue that has not been mentioned under courage, temperance and wisdom.

*Al-'Ibādah*⁵⁴ which includes worship, reverence and obedience to God, belief in angels and prophets, respect for pious men, observance of the Sharī'ah, and piety (*taqwā*), has also been considered as a form of justice.

This is Miskawaih's general idea of justice. From it he passes on to the description of its particular forms. In continuation of the above mentioned definition of justice he goes on to say that "as a result of this disposition one chooses in the first instance to be fair to oneself in all private matters, and then observes fairness in those matters which are between himself and any others."⁵⁵

What is fair or what is the criterion of fairness, is a difficult question. In matters of simple exchange fairness has been defined by Miskawaih as equality (*Musāwāt*).⁵⁶ In relations other than exchange, justice has been said to consist in "giving what is due, to whom it is due, and in the way it is due."⁵⁷ It is in these relations to other beings that the notion of the mean becomes relevant, and we have the definition of justice as the mean between oppressing others (*ẓulm*) and being oppressed by them (*inẓilām*).⁵⁸

There are three kinds of justice :

- (1) Justice within the self.
- (2) Justice in relation to other men and society.
- (3) Justice in relation to God.

The first kind of justice we have already discussed. (2) The relation of the individual to other human beings has been further analysed by Miskawaih into two categories, his relation to (i) living men and to (ii) those who are dead, i.e. his ancestors and benefactors. Justice to ancestors consists in paying the debt which they had incurred, in enforcing their will after them, and other similar things.⁵⁹ Justice to living men has been discussed elaborately by Miskawaih. It is what Aristotle calls social justice.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Of social justice Miskawaih distinguishes primarily two kinds : (1) Distributive justice, which includes (a) the distribution of any public fund or stock of wealth, honour or whatever else may be allocated among the members of a community by a social agency and (b) justice in contracts, in the exchange of commodities, and in kinds of transactions carried out by individuals or groups.⁶⁰ (2) Reparative justice, which is realised in the exaction from a wrong-doer, for the benefit of the person wronged, of damages just equivalent to the loss suffered by the latter.⁶¹

Miskawaih goes on to show in what way just distribution will be determined in different cases. In case (1, a) the distribution should be in *al-Nisbat al-Munfasilah*, i.e. geometrical proportion, which is expressed in the form $A : B :: C : D$. That is, the relation of share A (in wealth or honour) to the person B would be the same as the relation of share C to the person D. This rule can also be put in this way. As the merits of B are to those of D, so will be the honour or advantage which B receives to that which D receives.⁶² In short the distribution here will be according to merit.

In (1, b), namely, in matters of exchange and contracts the distribution will be sometimes in *al-Nisbat al-Munfasilah*, and at other times in *al-Nisbat al-Mufassalah*, which can be expressed in this form : $A : B :: B : C$. This proportion can also be called arithmetical proportion. But from the illustrations⁶³ which Miskawaih gives here we arrive at only one way of distribution, namely, that exchange in such cases will be on the basis of value of either the articles or the labours exchanged. In buying, selling, letting etc., the question is, therefore, one of the value of the commodity which will be determined by the rule of arithmetical equality. From him who has taken more than his commodity is worth for, the surplus amount should be taken and returned to the person who has suffered the loss. Thus the equality of value will be restored.⁶⁴

In (2), namely, in cases of retributive justice the same rule of arithmetical proportion will hold. The purpose of this justice is to bring back the relative position which obtained before the wrong was done. The duty of the judge is to restore the original position, either by punishing the wrong-doer or giving redress to the wronged.⁶⁵ Thus in both reparative justice and exchange simple equality will be the determining principle of distribution.

In matters of exchange equality means equality in labour,⁶⁶ whether in terms of service or in the form of articles. When labour on both sides

is equal the exchange is just, otherwise not. Where labour cannot be easily compared because of differences in qualities or kinds, *Dīnār* (money) is the value-measuring device (*muqawwim*). It is through money that in such cases justice can be achieved. *Dīnār* is the silent agency for administering justice. It is employed to regulate transactions and exchanges according to the rules of justice. But it is not necessary that money should always perform this justice-administering function.⁶⁸ In case money fails in this function, the authority of the government should be involved to restore just and fair dealings. The duty of the government here is to assist and supplement the function of money and set it right whenever it fails to fulfil its function.⁶⁸

The function of the government, however, is not limited to the maintenance of justice in the market. It is also responsible for establishing justice in all social relations. A just government (*al-Imām al-‘Ādil*) has to look after both kinds of justice, distributive and reparative. Every problem that has any bearing on the maintenance of social justice should be the concern of the government. Law must be subservient to justice. The government is thus the second and higher agency of administering justice.

But the decree of the government is not final. There is the third and the highest authority for maintaining justice. It is the Sharī‘ah. The law of the Sharī‘ah is final and all other agencies of justice are subject to its authority. “The highest *nāmūs* (authority)”, says Miskawaih, “is from God, the Magnificent, the Ruler (*Ḥākim*) is the second *nāmūs* deriving his authority from Him, and *Dīnār* is the third *nāmūs*. The Divine *nāmūs* is the supreme of all *nawāmūs* (authorities), and it is the Sharī‘ah. The government as well as the monetary value are subordinate to the dictates of the law (the Sharī‘ah). The function of *Dīnār* is to maintain social justice (*al-‘Adl al-Madanī*) in its own sphere. When social justice is established society and its cultural pattern will be maintained, otherwise they will be destroyed. The greatest tyrant is one who does not recognise and submit to the Sharī‘ah. Next in injustice to him is the person who does not obey the laws of the government in all his dealings and relations. Last of all comes the man who does not earn, but appropriates the property of others.”⁶⁹

The Sharī‘ah has been completely identified with justice. He who obeys the Sharī‘ah is just. This does not mean, however, that justice is submission to an external authority. Justice is, and will always remain, a character of the self, an inner development which finds expression in virtuous activities. Since the Sharī‘ah is the embodiment of virtues, to

abide by its rules is nothing other than self-realization.

This conception of the role of the Sharī'ah raises a question. Miskawaih maintains that justice is the product of wisdom, that it is only through Reason that one can become just. On the other hand, justice cannot be conceived without the Sharī'ah, which is almost synonymous with justice. The question is: Is it necessary that the dictates of Reason should agree with those of the Sharī'ah? Or must the laws of the Sharī'ah be approved by Reason? Miskawaih, does not admit that there can be any real conflict between Reason and the Sharī'ah. If the Sharī'ah is from God, Reason, too, is no less from Him. In fact, he says that Reason is the vicegerent⁷⁰ of God in man, and the Sharī'ah is His commandments. There is no reason to assume any conflict between the two. Religion and true philosophy are one in the end; the difference lies only in the ways they adopt to convey their message and meaning.⁷¹ Moreover, the Sharī'ah lays down only general rules, it does not provide details⁷² which have to be worked out by Reason. This answer, however, does not fully solve the question. It is true that there is no essential conflict between Reason and the Sharī'ah as both are from God. But here we are not concerned with Reason in general but with particular reasons, and there is no guarantee that conflict will not occur between the Sharī'ah and the pronouncements of particular reasons. Miskawaih's position would most probably be that particular reasons should submit to the general rules of the Sharī'ah. But the truth is that he did not view the problem in this form or he probably avoided facing it.

We shall take up the problem of justice in relation to God in the course of our discussion of the love of God.

L O V E

In discussing the various virtues under justice Miskawaih has also commented on love and friendship. They are described as forms of justice, rather the advanced ones. This, however, does not appear to reveal the essence of love, or its manifold nature. There is also something more in true friendship that can hardly be brought under justice. In the course of the detailed treatment of love and friendship which covers a number of pages, the conception of love assumes a sort of independence, and it is exalted to one of the fundamental virtues. Friendship is no more treated as a form of justice. It is a form of love. The essential characteristic of love is self-transcendence. Preference for other's needs

and interests for their sake is what distinguishes love from other fundamental virtues. Love is basically altruistic. From this it does not follow that all other virtues are self-centred. They have an element of altruism, which cannot be completely identified with enlightened egotism. Generosity, for instance, is, as we have seen, altruistic. However, they are mainly self-oriented. Love is the supreme altruistic virtue. Justice in the sense of the most harmonious development includes love, self-love in the real sense is not opposed to love of another. However, the justice which has been elaborated in the context of society falls short of the ideal of love. The essence of social justice is equality or equity which is incapable of assimilating that self-sacrifice and self-abnegation that is essential to love.

Love is inherent in the nature of man. *Insān* (man) is derived from *ins* (affection), which is the origin of all love.⁷³ Love is the development of this essential element of humanity, i.e., affection. And as the realization of the true element of humanity, love is a virtue and consequently a necessary constituent of happiness. To be perfectly happy one must love, but his love must be for its own sake.⁷⁴

Love is a better substitute for justice. The ends of social co-operation, harmony and happiness which justice seeks to safeguard are better achieved through love, since it generates that spiritual unification of human souls in which there no longer occurs any violation of mutual rights, in which every one wishes for the other what he wishes for himself. All strive for common perfection. No truth is then inaccessible to them, and no virtue beyond their reach. Each shares in the knowledge and the *sa'ādah* of the other.⁷⁵

In the course of their development men are often attracted by some pleasant or useful object which produces love. But love that is inspired by either pleasure or utility is variable and unstable. It is impure and imperfect.⁷⁶ The true form of love is based on the desire for virtue,⁷⁷ that is, it is born of the rational soul. Such love alone is abiding and unalterable, pure and perfect. It is this love which is a divine virtue.⁷⁸ Miskawaih sees in it the realization of that inherent tendency of man to assimilate the Good.⁷⁹ But beyond a casual reference to this Platonic idea we find no elaboration of it in Miskawaih.

After discussing the causes of love, Miskawaih proceeds to study the actual forms of love. The most natural love is the love of the parents for their children. In parental love or in begetting children Miskawaih, like Plato, sees the extension and perpetuation of the self. The child is the embodiment of the desire for immortality. The presence of this desire in parents explains why they so completely identify themselves

with their children, and its lack accounts for the disparity in love which children show towards their parents.⁸⁰

Though less intense than parental love, yet more spiritual and far nobler is the love of the teacher for his pupil. It is born of his spiritual relationship with the pupil. It is pure, perfect and divine. The child owes its being to its parents, but its sa'ādah to its teacher. The teacher is the spiritual father, rather a human providence (*rabb bashary*). He almost resembles God in his love for his pupil.⁸¹ Miskawaih's teacher is both a philosopher and a spiritual guide (*murshid*). Such an ideal and disinterested love must evoke an ideal response in the pupil. He should whole-heartedly obey, respect and love his teacher.⁸²

The ideal relation between the ruler and his subjects is one of love. The ruler should love his people as his own children and they should love their ruler as father.⁸³ The state is the extension of the family, and its relations are familial, not contractual.

FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is a form of love.⁸⁴ It strengthens the bond of union, and brings two souls so close that one is identified with the other. In the words of Aristotle a true friend is the second self.⁸⁵ Pleasure or utility are often the cause of friendship. But friendship which originates in the desire for pleasure or utility is imperfect, since it does not bring complete spiritual unification. It is unstable and temporary. So long as the object is fulfilled it continues, but as soon as the object ceases to be attained it vanishes.⁸⁶ Friendship which is based on the love of the good or virtue alone is abiding, and it is most perfect since it alone can generate the highest spiritual union.⁸⁷

Friendship is a moral need. In the case of the virtuous it is all the more necessary. A true friend is the best helper in moral life. Because of his keen interest he perceives various shortcomings of the friend and most sympathetically suggests ways for their correction. The friendship of a virtuous man is a perpetual source of inspiration, and an incentive to higher ideals.⁸⁸ The virtuous man is more in need of spiritual communion than the vicious. And such communion is only possible in the company of a good friend.

Friendship, however, is not merely a spiritual exchange or a mutual assistance. Nor is it another name for enlightened self-love. As a kind of love its essential nature is altruistic. Miskawaih defines friendship as "true love which generates keen interest in all that belongs to the friend

and makes one prefer all possible good things for him rather than for oneself."⁸⁹ He again and again emphasises self-sacrifice, self-abnegation, and preference for the interests of the friend. And this is not for a good name, or because of any other selfish motive, but for the sake of the friend himself.⁹⁰ De Boer's characterisation on this point that "friendship, therefore, is not as Aristotle would have it, an expansion of self-love, but a limitation of it, or a kind of love of one's neighbour,"⁹¹ is perfectly true. True friendship is altruistic in motive, but in its effect it is not opposed to self-perfection. It is both self-realization and self-transcendence.

On the whole the picture of friendship which Miskawaih has drawn is colder than that we have in Plato's *Phaedrus*, but it is more natural and human.

LOVE AND JUSTICE WITH GOD

The relation of man with God has been conceived by Miskawaih both in the context of justice and love. The essence of justice outside the self is equality or equity. But equality cannot be applied to the relations of man with God, as His blessings are unimaginable. Moreover, He needs no return. The only thing that man can do is to show his obligation and gratitude. A profound sense of gratitude, in Miskawaih's view, encompasses the whole of life and pervades all actions, thoughts and feelings.⁹² It inspires faith, reverence, obedience and love. Observation of the rules of the Sharī'ah, belief in, and respect for, God's angels, prophets and friends (*awliyā'*) are so many ways of justice in relation to God.⁹³

Love of God is the supreme manifestation of justice. It is also the outcome of that essential affinity which exists between man and the Divine Being. There is a divine element (*al-Jawhar al-Ilāhī*) in man,⁹⁴ which when purged of vice, freed from evil desire and sinful love, develops the love of its Divine analogue (*Shabīh*), the First Good.⁹⁵ When he has attained the height of this love the divine light overwhelms him. This is the highest ascent and the greatest happiness for man. This is the meaning of union with God,⁹⁶ which, however, can be perfect only in the next life when the soul is completely free from every contamination by the body.⁹⁷

Miskawaih's exposition of the love of God is very restrained and somewhat cold. That glow and warmth which are found in Platonic love, or the self-effacement and the craving for assimilation with the Divine that are found in mysticism are absent in him. In conception as well as

in spirit his love is a blend of Platonic mysticism with Aristotelian intellectualism.

All kinds of love are subject to limitations. Only the love of God is above all limitation. It alone is beyond all change and dissolution, eternal and infinite.⁹⁸

Love of God leads to the observance of the rules of His Sharī'ah. And the Sharī'ah is the embodiment of love. "Love for men what you love for yourself"⁹⁹ is the command of the Prophet. Through its different forms of worship (*'ibādāt*) the Sharī'ah brings men nearer and closer to one another, strengthens the bonds of natural affection, and widens the range of love. The daily prayers five times a day, the *Juma'* gatherings in a mosque once a week, the two huge congregations on the *'Ids* every year, and finally the worldwide meet at least once in one's life at the *Ḥaj*, are progressive steps for the realization of the unity and love of mankind.¹⁰⁰

The observance of the laws of the Sharī'ah is essential not only for this social unity and love but also for the virtuous life of the individual. By elevating the soul of man through the love of God the Sharī'ah makes easier the cultivation of virtue and the attainment of perfection. Since the love of God is not subject to change and dissolution, it serves as a permanent and inexhaustible source of inspiration for progressively higher ideals.

Miskawaih even goes on to say that the attainment of a virtuous life, of social unity and sincere love of mankind, is not possible without the observance of the rules of the Sharī'ah. For, one can achieve these ends only after attaining true knowledge, right discipline, and firm beliefs, and these are possible only in a Divinely revealed religion.¹⁰¹

CHAPTER VII

Practical Ethics

By now we have almost finished the exposition of the theoretical principles of Miskawaih's ethics. This is, however, only one aspect of his ethics. Its practical aspect has still to be studied. Although in the modern usage ethics is confined to a theoretical discussion of the fundamental notions of the good, the right and the like, but the ancient and medieval thinkers generally observed no clear distinction between the theoretical and the practical aspects of ethics. For them the task of ethics was not only to analyse and justify basic concepts but also to discuss the methods of attaining a virtuous life. It was not only concerned with the nature of happiness or virtue, but also with the methods of their attainment. The questions of what and how were inseparably bound together and both were equally the concern of ethics. Ethics was a science as well as an art, and the latter aspect was generally considered to be the natural consummation of the former. Miskawaih's treatise opens with these words : "The purpose of writing this book is that we may cultivate such characters of our soul that every act proceeding from them may be good and wholesome, easy and spontaneous. Our method, however, will be scientific and our procedure systematic."¹ This succinct statement on the nature and method of ethics admirably combines both the theoretical and the practical aspects of ethics, the what and the how of virtuous life.

The scope of the how of virtue may be very wide, its details may run into volumes. But what Miskawaih is concerned with is the formulation of some basic principles that may serve as a guide for the attainment of a virtuous life and the maintenance of moral health. In such discussions particular details are often inevitable, either to illustrate the principle or to justify it, and we shall present them whenever required. There may also be a point of theoretical interest in doing so. We have noted earlier that in Miskawaih's conception of the virtuous life there is, for instance, an element of asceticism. What is the precise meaning of this? How far and in what objects should a virtuous man practise asceticism? Without these details no correct idea can be formed of the virtuous life.

The whole of Miskawaih's practical ethics can be divided into three parts.

1. How to cultivate virtue,
2. How to preserve virtue or maintain the health of the soul, and
3. How to rid the soul of vice.

We shall take these problems one by one.

CULTIVATION OF VIRTUE

Virtue, as we have seen consists in the union of the natural with the rational, or the functioning of the natural impulses and faculties according to reason. Nature provides the raw material which is to be developed and formed into virtue. No virtue can, therefore, be cultivated for which natural capacities and dispositions do not exist. Nature provides those channels in which effort may be fruitful, and draws those limits within which virtues may be cultivated. Further, men do not differ only in their particular dispositions and capacities, they differ also in the degree and strength of the same capacity or disposition. This is another limit that nature sets to the cultivation of virtue. Every generous man cannot be a Ḥātim, nor every thinker a Plato. However, the limits set by nature are not rigid and inflexible. All this must be kept in mind before embarking on the cultivation of virtue.

The ordering of natural capacities or the development of innate dispositions is not a process of understanding. Virtue is not a matter of instruction only. In directly identifying virtue with knowledge Socrates left only one way open for the cultivation of moral virtues, that is, the way of intellectual instruction. For Plato and for those who came after him virtue was no longer identical with wisdom. They consequently discovered, besides ignorance, another source of bad conduct in the internal disorder and conflict of the soul in which non-rational impulses dominated Reason. Accepting this obvious fact Miskawaih emphasises the role of training and constant practice. It is not merely by learning or the exercise of reason that one can attain virtue. Virtue is the result of the regular subordination of the irrational to the rational soul. Since the irrational soul is unruly and often strongly inclined to violate and overpower the rational, virtue is the outcome of persistent effort by which natural impulses are gradually brought under the control of reason. Further, virtue is not the occasional performance of good acts, but a permanent state of the soul, its lasting character. As such the cultivation of virtue takes time and demands sustained effort, effort which continues

throughout life. It is a journey unto death. The struggle for virtue never ends, because there is no limit to human perfection. It is an uphill expedition in which the summit goes on rising and is always round the corner.

We have already discussed the role of moral insight in determining the proper mean in actual situations, and the way it is developed. We need not, therefore, go over the discussion again. But we must emphasise that moral insight is produced only through moral action. Once gained, this insight is our guide in further actions, which in turn sharpen the insight, and this process of interaction goes on endlessly. Moral action and insight thus strengthen each other. Insight is like the skill of a swimmer which can only be gained through swimming. And as the skill attained by a swimmer enables him to achieve better performance, similarly insight facilitates a person's performance of virtuous acts. The only way to develop insight, therefore, is to go on acting morally.

The process of the cultivation of virtue occurs in two stages. The first is the stage of childhood, when the child's training in virtue is in the hands of the elders. The child has no knowledge concerning the desirability and nature of virtue. The second stage comes after the child has grown into an adult. At this stage he becomes fully conscious of the value of moral life, and chooses to be virtuous as a result of his own judgment.

TRAINING OF CHILDREN IN VIRTUE

Miskawaih is perfectly conscious of the importance of early childhood for the development of character. The experience of his own life was an eye-opener to him, and it led him to realise the value and importance of early training. So keen was this realization that whenever he discusses this, his exposition changes into a fervent appeal.

The basic principle that should govern the training in virtue is to follow the order of nature.² There is a natural order in the emergence of different desires, impulses and faculties of man. The task of an instructor or guide is to understand this order and then follow it in planning this training and instruction. The idea of evolution that has provided a criterion for determining the relative values of different faculties and desires, now serves as the determining principle of the order in which different desires and impulses should be trained.

The order in which different desires and powers develop in man has been already given in outline. Some elaboration of it, however, is required

here. The first desire that appears in a child is the desire for food. The objects which satisfy it go on multiplying, from the simple milk of the mother to innumerable things. Next comes the irascible power, which includes anger, courage, desire for honour, recognition and domination. The desire for knowledge develops through the various stages of sensation, imagination, memory and reason. Reason is composed of discrimination, which appears first, and of intellection or reflection, which comes last. The power of discrimination is first manifested in the feeling of shame (*ḥayā'*) that the child experiences when he does an evil act. This feeling of shame marks the passage of the child from one stage of life to the other. It signifies that the child has developed the power to distinguish between good and evil and also to dislike evil and shrink from it. But even at this second stage reason is not fully developed, it is incapable of independent decision and action. This is the period of the passive formation of character. When the powers of discrimination and deliberation have become comparatively mature, the child enters upon the active stage of his moral life. He can now employ his rational faculty in making judgments as to his preferred course of action. Only in this period is the individual's will free in the true sense, as only now he can use his rational insight.³

The second stage is very important in the formation of character for two reasons. Firstly, the moral habits of the child are now being formed, and it will be difficult, though not impossible, to change them later on. Secondly, the moral insight which is so important in the decisions concerning the right and the wrong and the determination of the proper mean, has now come into being.

Whatever the child learns in this period is mainly through imitation, and whatever virtue or vice he develops is due to the impact of his environment upon him. It is, therefore, the supreme duty of the parents to use all the available means and all the effective methods such as persuasion, education, reward and punishment in building up the character of the child.⁴

The child should always be persuaded to perform good actions. He should be instructed to follow the rules of religion. Miskawaih considers observance of the rules of the *Sharī'ah* absolutely essential.⁵ Virtuous acts should be praised before the child, so that he may develop a desire to do them, and vicious acts should be condemned so that he may begin to hate them.⁶ Stories of good deeds and tales of virtuous men should also be told. But nothing evil and indiscreet should be imparted to the child through the media of poems, stories or life histories. Miskawaih

condemns the reading or recitation of immoral and obscene poetry as emphatically as Plato does. In gratifying his desires the child should be advised to observe moderation. He should be instructed to make sacrifices for others, and place their needs before his own.⁸ His desires for food, drink and clothes should all be regulated. Emphasis should be placed on the eradication of the lust for pleasure and greed for beautiful and pleasant objects.

The child's food should form the first object of attention. His diet should be regulated so that it may provide adequate nourishment than the pleasure of taste. It should be impressed upon him that food is meant for health and not for pleasure. Later his food may be reduced to the bare level of medicine for relieving hunger. He should learn to be content with one dish only. His food should gradually become less tasty. Meat should be forbidden so that the child may remain active, wakeful and intelligent. Sweets and fruits should be banned as far as possible, so that he may not become sluggish and gluttonous. All drugs should be completely prohibited. He should be instructed in table manners. At the dining table he should not be the first to begin, be content with what is close at hand, and not fix his gaze on different dishes. He should not rush through his meal, should chew his food well, and take it in small morsels. He should not eat his food until he has finished his daily routine, and is fully tired.⁹

His dress should be appropriate. A male child should not wear clothes of gaudy colours which are suitable only for women. His clothes should be coarse and preferably white. He should be habituated to rough and hard living, for instance, he should not use flax and cooled chamber in summer, nor fur and fire in winter.¹⁰ His hours of eating, drinking, sleeping, and of rest after lunch should be regulated. He should not sleep during the day, and not much at night, since too much sleep dulls the intellect and kills the heart. His bed should not be comfortable. He should take physical exercises and physical labour in order to maintain himself in health, and to avoid becoming lazy. He should learn to regulate his speed; it should be neither too fast nor too slow. He should comb his hair but he should not pay too much attention to it. He should not be allowed to put rings on his fingers, or indulge in personal ornamentation of any kind. He should play games but only at the proper time. He should be taught the art of polite conversation and of meeting with others. Love of truth and hatred of falsehood should be inculcated, and all unnecessary talk should be avoided.¹¹

After this thorough training in moral virtues and when his reason

has become relatively matured the development of intellectual virtues should be attended to. He should begin with mathematics and geometry and then take up logic.¹² Logic prepares the intellect to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and valid and fallacious reasoning. His attention should first be directed to those objects which can be easily observed, i.e., the objects of the physical world. From physics he should go on to astronomy and then to metaphysics and theology.¹³ Miskawaih suggests a number of books by Aristotle on logic, physics and other subjects, which should be studied by the student in order to become a philosopher.¹⁴ Books on ethics are recommended later to ensure the understanding of the nature of virtue and happiness, and the attainment of a virtuous life through the use of reason.¹⁵ After the culture of the self comes the regulation of the family, and lastly the organisation and government of the city or state.¹⁶ This is the order which should be followed in the attainment of a happy and virtuous life.

SELF-TRAINING OF THE GROWN-UPS

Cultivation of virtue is a life-long process. When a person becomes conscious of the value of virtuous life and resolves to attain virtue he should follow the order mentioned above. From the desires of the appetitive soul he should pass on to those of the irascible and then to those of the rational.

An example of self-training is furnished by the rules and principles which Miskawaih observed for his own moral culture at a later age.

The rules are in the form of a pledge that he made to God. As a prelude to this pledge he mentions the four cardinal virtues, which he keeps before himself as his ideal. The pledge is given below :¹⁷

“This is what Aḥmad b. Muḥammad pledges to adhere to. He makes this pledge while he fully enjoys the peace of his mind and the health of his body and gets the meal of the day. Nothing forced him to take this pledge, neither any desire of his body nor any craving of his soul, neither any desire to enlist the sympathy of other people, nor the hope of any gain, nor even the fear of evil. He resolves to fight against his irrational self, to keep strict vigilance over it, and to be temperate, brave and judicious. The mark of his temperance will be that he will observe moderation in gratifying the desires of his body, so that it may not cause him physical injury, or bring him into disgrace. The mark of his courage will be that he will fight against his reprehensible self so as not to allow his baser desires or untimely anger to conquer him. The

mark of his wisdom will be to seek insight and conviction in his beliefs, trying always, as far as he can, to avoid letting any true knowledge and useful science escape him, so that he may discipline his mind and improve his spiritual creations (i.e. intellectual and moral attainments). The outcome of this whole struggle and the fruit of all this endeavour will be justice.”

“He pledges to observe the following fifteen rules in the conduct of his life :—

(1) To prefer the right to the wrong in beliefs, the true to the false in speech; and the good to the evil in actions.

(2) To struggle ceaselessly in order to subject his animal nature to his essential humanity.

(3) To obey faithfully the Shari‘ah, and believe in the necessity of its commandments.

(4) To keep in memory promises until they are fulfilled, particularly those which are made to God.

(5) To place little reliance on men, and to avoid familiarity with them in order to achieve this purpose.

(6) To love the beautiful and the wholesome for its own sake and for no other reason.

(7) To observe silence in moments of agitation until he is directed by his reason.

(8) To continue any state of the soul that is beneficial until it becomes a habit, and to avoid destroying it by over-indulgence.

(9) To take an initiative in things that are right.

(10) To be anxious to spend his time in higher pursuits instead of wasting it over the lower ones.

(11) To conquer the fear of death or poverty in order to do desirable actions, and to avoid indolence.

(12) Not to pay any attention to the words of evil and jealous men lest he may be engaged with them in contest, and not to allow himself to be impressed by them.

(13) To be accustomed to prosperity or poverty, honour or disgrace in the right and proper manner.

(14) To recall to his mind the times of sickness when he is in health, and occasions of joy and pleasure when anger is apt to arise, so that he may commit no acts of injustice and transgression.

(15) To be hopeful and daring and have trust in God, the Great and the Glorious, turning his whole heart towards Him.

This sincere pledge of the philosopher shows his conviction of the

ethical ideals that he has taken pains to expound. It is inspired by the same love of the good and the beautiful, and displays the greatness of his soul and his anxiety not to lose any time in minor pursuits. It affirms his faith in the Sharī'ah and his trust in God. It emphasises the value of self-reliance, perseverance, forbearance, self-composure, contentment and above all of moderation.

But what strikes us in the rules laid down for the training of children and grown-ups is their rigidity and stringency. Miskawaih prescribes these rules equally for the rich and the poor, for the king and the beggar. Although he recognises that it is not so easy for the former as it may be for the latter,¹⁸ he is not prepared to make any allowance or concession for them. Individual differences and circumstances do not appear to affect the order of the stages of training in virtue. Every one has to follow the same fixed and rigid programme. With this dull and rigid sameness of moral and intellectual training is combined an element of unhealthy asceticism that is particularly conspicuous in the case of the training of children. It is, however, somewhat mitigated in the case of grown-ups. They have been allowed to enjoy some of the pleasures of the body, to take rest and to have a little comfort.

To the other two problems of his practical ethics Miskawaih has devoted the VIth and the VIIth chapters of the *Tahdhīb*. The sixth deals with the ways and means of maintaining the health of the soul, that is, the preservation of virtues that are already present, while the seventh deals with diseases that afflict the soul, i.e. vices, and their treatment. Both these sections form what he calls the *Ṭibb-e-Nafsī* (the medical science of the soul), which follows in general the methods of *Ṭibb-e-Jismānī* (the medical science of the body).

The basic assumption of Miskawaih's *Ṭibb-e-Nafsī* is that man is a whole with the body and the soul interacting each other. As long as the soul resides in the body, it affects the life of the body and is in turn affected by it. Extreme excitement of the soul in anger, for instance, increases the speed of the circulation of blood in the body, raises its temperature, and often hinders the proper functioning of its various organs.¹⁹ The diseases of the body, on the other hand, seriously impair the health of the soul. Too much eating, for instance, dulls the spirit and blunts the intellect. Likewise the drinking of liquor excites carnal desires and weakens the hold of reason.²⁰

Miskawaih goes a step further than this mere interaction of the soul and body. He applies the principles of *Ṭibb-e-Jismānī* to the *Ṭibb-e-Nafsī*. However, beyond making a few observations he does not pursue

any independent investigation into the diseases of the soul or their treatment. This assumes a closer affinity between the soul and the body.

PRESERVATION OF THE HEALTH OF THE SOUL

The cultivation of virtue is a difficult task, but no less difficult and painstaking is its preservation. Virtue means effecting a delicate balance in the working of the different faculties of the mind. The harmony of the soul which is brought about by the subordination of the irrational parts of the soul to the rule of reason, can be very easily destroyed. It is, therefore, extremely important that nothing should be done which may upset its balance and undermine its harmony. Every action, conscious or subconscious, leading to imbalance or disharmony should be avoided. The concupiscent faculties should not be stimulated by continued dwelling upon lascivious objects. Imagination should not be allowed to play upon evil things and acts. Desires should be left to themselves, nature has invested them with enough powers for self-excitement. One should not, therefore, deliberately excite his desires.²¹

Association with vicious men is highly conducive to the stirring up of desires and to the encouragement of vice. It should be avoided at all costs. An evil act from a vicious man, or a word from his mouth, even his presence alone is sufficient to let loose the forces of evil in us.²² Man is too weak to withstand the allurements of desires. The results of long and arduous education and training are undone in no time.

A third enemy of virtuous life is indulgence in the pleasures of body and the struggle that one makes for experiencing them.²³ Miskawaih has very forcefully advocated contentment or frugality (*qanā'ah*). *Qanā'ah* for him means to be content with as much share in the material goods as may suffice for one's bare needs. In earning this, too, decency, decorum and moral rules should never be violated. One must earn his living, and make all efforts to avoid dependence on others. It is no virtue, no part of *qanā'ah*, and never the mark of piety to make others shoulder one's burden.²⁴

Qanā'ah for Miskawaih is a universal virtue. It should be observed by every one whether he is a labourer or a king. The lower one's economic status the easier it is for him to achieve *qanā'ah*. *Qanā'ah*, however, is not to be looked down upon as misery (*faqr*). On the contrary, *qanā'ah* is the real prosperity, since misery consists in the multiplication of wants, and prosperity lies in their minimisation. The lesser his wants the happier the man, and consequently the more prosperous ²⁵ *Qanā'ah* is the best

of all riches and the most precious of all treasures. Miskawaih laments the lot of kings who become unhappy because of their multiple wants. Those nearer to them in social status are more or less like them, their condition varies with their distance from kings.²⁶ Miskawaih recalls the words of Abū Bakr who said, "Kings are the most unhappy of men, both in this world and the next."²⁷ He reports that one of the greatest kings of his time, probably 'Aḍud al-Dawlah, often repeated these words. They had deeply impressed him, and his face did not fail to reflect that impression.²⁸

It is imperative to recognise the supreme value of virtue. The more value one attaches to virtuous life the greater effort will he put in for maintaining it.²⁹ One must have the conviction that the real perfection of man lies in virtue, and not in external goods. Virtue, however small, is more valuable than any amount of material wealth. Likewise a small vice is a greater evil than abject poverty. Petty vices must also be dreaded, since the smaller lead to the bigger ones. By committing small sins time and again one is easily allured to more deadly ones. Whenever a person commits a vice for the first time his conscience rebels and reproaches him. This enables him to refrain from it. But if he commits it again, the voice of his conscience becomes ineffective and it is too difficult for him to rid himself of the vice.³⁰

Mere recognition of the nobility and value of virtue, however, is not sufficient. An endeavour should be made to develop both intellectual and moral virtues. The cultivation of virtue should be pursued on the lines that have been discussed above. The study of philosophy, thinking and contemplation should go together with the effort for the cultivation of moral virtues. They are the food of the soul.³¹ Neglect of rational activity will lead to the starvation of the soul. It will weaken its hold on the irrational faculties and make it more susceptible to the allurements of desires.

Virtue is conditioned by wisdom. But wisdom once achieved can also be forgotten. Constant repetition of virtuous acts under the guidance of wisdom is therefore essential. Wisdom is most elusive. Great vigilance is required to ensure its constant functioning.³²

The successful adoption of these measures calls for constant watchfulness. We often forget how we are required to think and act. Occasional checking and scrutiny of daily activities and routines should become a habit.³³

If as a result of such checking a person finds that he has committed a vice, the soul and the body should both be subjected to

punishment. Miskawaih has given different forms of self-punishment such as foregoing pleasure, self-reproach, subjection of the body to hard discipline like long and painstaking prayers, and subjection of the soul to insults and reproofs flung by others. Some of these measures of self-chastisement appear to be too severe. He, however, strongly condemns all measures that run counter to the Shari'ah.³⁴

Another more effective measure for the preservation of virtue is good friendship or cordial relations with virtuous men. Their examples and counsels are very helpful in carrying one through difficult situations, and facilitate one's progress to higher and yet higher levels.³⁵ Lastly the healthiest suggestion is that one should gain increasing familiarity with the noble exemplars of intellectual and moral excellences. To come in contact with them or to live with them in imagination, is to participate in their life and to share in their virtue.³⁶

DISEASES OF THE SOUL AND THEIR TREATMENT

We come next to the pathological side of the life of the soul. As in the case of the diseases of the body, similarly here we should first try to diagnose the actual diseases and their causes and then try to find out their proper treatment. But unlike the physical diseases the diseases of the soul are very complicated and more difficult to diagnose and cure.

In his book, *How To Know The Defects Of One's Soul*, Galen has suggested that a good friend should be found who may act as a soul-physician, diagnose diseases of the soul and then suggest their treatment. Though it is not easy to find such a man, still this method is highly effective. Every endeavour should be made to find such a physician. Once found, he should be persuaded by appeals and entreaties to undertake this arduous task. After he has diagnosed the vices, one must submit oneself to the prescribed treatment.³⁷

Miskawaih, however, is not satisfied with this idea of the soul-physician, because he thinks that such a man is not easily available. "Perhaps" he says, "an enemy might be more useful than a friend. For, an enemy's understanding of our vices is more penetrating and his examination more thorough. He neither overlooks nor conceals anything and feels no hesitation in disclosing whatever evil he discovers in us."³⁸ Galen has himself recognised to some extent the value of an enemy in this respect.³⁹

In discovering vices one has to rely mostly on oneself. This is certainly difficult, but one has got to do it. One may also be benefited,

as al-Kindī suggests, by the observation of others' lives.⁴⁰ Generally our own vices are hidden from us. To find out the defects and vices of others is easier, particularly of those who are close to us, such as friends and relatives. When during his observations a person discovers some vice in another person, he should examine himself and find out whether or not he is also suffering from it. If he is, he should reproach himself, repent repeatedly and make a firm resolve not to succumb to similar temptations again. This practice should be made a part of his daily routine.⁴¹ The observation of the lives of vicious men, too, may sometimes prove useful. The sight of vice in evil persons excites contempt and evokes strong repulsion, and thus helps one to eradicate it from one's own life, if it is there. It may also indirectly revive and strengthen the love of the opposite virtue and facilitate its cultivation. To learn manners and virtues from the ill-mannered and the vicious is a method of recognised efficacy.⁴² Al-Dawwānī⁴³ traces the origin of this method to Christ, and al-Sa'dī⁴⁴ to Luqmān.

Broadly there are two vices lying at the two extremes of every virtue. Corresponding to the four cardinal virtues there are four pairs of eight vices : cowardice and rashness, covetousness and absence of desire, ignorance and cunning, transgression over others' rights and being exploited by them. Of the four pairs of vices only one, i.e., cowardice and rashness and their sub-species have been dealt with by Miskawaih at length. The other pairs of vices and their sub-species have not been discussed. This section is, therefore, incomplete.

Miskawaih's procedure in the discussion of vices is this. He first defines clearly what is meant by a certain vice. Then he shows the various factors that cause it and points out the evil effects that it produces on the life of the individual and society. In this discussion he draws upon physiology, psychology and politics. In his study Miskawaih tries to be accurate, deep and comprehensive, and is to a large extent successful.

In order to emphasise the abomination of vice and arouse a feeling of strong disgust for it, he depicts a loathsome picture of it. To be content with only a small share in the goods of this world, study of the lives of the Prophet and other greatmen has been recommended. To bring home to his readers the little importance of the love of this life and the much greater significance of the life hereafter, he frequently quotes from the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth, and from the sayings of the companions of the Prophet and of other great men regardless of creed or religion.⁴⁵ By fables and stories, by proverbs and metaphors, he greatly impresses his readers.

It may be noted that he does not make any distinction between crime and sin. A wrong act is both a social crime and a religious sin. The motive of other-worldly happiness and the attainment of the pleasure of God are neatly balanced with the appeal to human reason and conscience.⁴⁶ But the dread of future punishment and the fear of Hell have little place in his ethics, hence in his treatment of vice we seldom come to an appeal based on fear—an appeal which is so strong, living and impressive in the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and the teachings of the early divines and ṣūfīs. In this respect his attitude is almost identical with the attitude of other philosophers.

The methods that Miskawaih advocates for the treatment of vices are in the main analogous to those followed in *Ṭibb-e-Jismānī*. The cause of a vice may lie in the body, in the soul or in the temperament, and the treatment should be designed accordingly.⁴⁷ After the correct diagnosis of the cause, remedial measures should follow the rule of treatment by opposites.⁴⁸ Vice is a deviation from the mean, towards one extreme or the other. To remove the vice or to restore the mean, therefore, one has to move in the opposite direction, that is, towards the other extreme. If the vice lies at the extreme of deficiency, one should resort to the measure of excess, and *vice versa*. In order to cure miserliness, for instance, one should try to be prodigal. By so doing miserliness can be cured, and the right mean of generosity restored.

In medical science treatments are of four kinds, through food, medicine, poison, cauterisation (*kayy*) and surgical operation (*qaṭa'*).⁴⁹ Analogous methods may be followed also in the *Ṭibb-e-Nafsī*. But Miskawaih does not show the practical application of these methods. They were later elaborated by Naṣīruddīn Ṭūsī.⁵⁰

Of the main vices only anger, fear and grief have been treated by Miskawaih at some length. The rest have been left out.

Miskawaih describes anger as the movement of the soul which makes the blood of the heart boil for vengeance. If the movement is violent the blood boils all the more excessively, the arteries of the brain are flooded with a black vapour that throws the intellect into disorder and impairs its proper functioning. When a man experiences excessive anger, he is like a cell set on fire, with the smoke and flames imprisoned within it. At this stage it is difficult to extinguish the fire of his rage. Every effort made to quell it may only add fuel to it. In such a condition one becomes completely blind to the right path, and deaf to every good advice. People, however, differ widely in their behaviour according to their temperament and constitution.⁵¹

The causes of anger are vanity, pride, discord, quarrelling, joke or ridicule, deceit, oppression, lust for pleasure breeding jealousy and the desire for vengeance. Miskawaih has discussed all these causes individually, and has very elaborately described their various manifestations. We need not go into these details.

He has similarly described fear and grief, pointed out their various causes, analysed their modes of expression, and suggested their remedies. We shall only discuss the fear of death by way of illustration.

Fear of death is shown by those who are ignorant of the immortality of the soul, by those who dread punishment after death, or by those who do not wish to give up their money and property. If the cause is ignorance of the true nature of death the only cure for fear is knowledge. When it is rightly understood that death means only the soul's abandonment of the use of its tools, the bodily organs, and that it is itself an essence and not an accident and so immortal, the fear of death is bound to vanish.⁵²

But those who fear death because they think death is too painful an experience should be reminded that it is not an extraordinary experience. Experiences more painful than death are often borne by men.⁵³ Those who fear death because they think that they will be punished in the next life, in fact, are afraid not of death but of their own sins. The only method of cure for them is that they should repent of their past sins and avoid committing them in future.⁵⁴

Those who fear death because of their love for wealth, property, family and favourites, only hanker after impossibilities. They do not wish ever to be deprived of these things. But this is no more than a childish fantasy.⁵⁵ Miskawaih believes that by imparting the knowledge of the true nature of death and of the life hereafter and by reducing the importance of this world and its objects, the fear of death can be banished from the hearts of people.

CHAPTER VIII

Society and the State

THE social nature of morality has been fully brought out in the previous chapters. That perfection is possible only in an organised society, that virtue cannot be cultivated in seclusion, that social co-operation is essential to common happiness have already been established. In view of the importance of society for morality, it is essential to study in some detail Miskawaih's conception of society and the state.

Politics was not Miskawaih's special interest. His views on society and government can be gathered from various passages that occur in *al-Fauz al-Aṣghar* or *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*. Al-Khwānsārī mentions a book on Politics, *Kiṭāb al-Siyāsah*, among Miskawaih's works. He also attributes a Persian work, *Nuzhat Nāma-e-ʿAlāʾī*, to him.¹ But neither of these books is extant. Our only sources in this area, therefore, are the *Tahdhīb* and *Al-Fauz*.

SOCIETY, ITS ORIGIN AND FUNCTIONS

Miskawaih's view of the origin of society and of man as a social being has been fully developed in *al-Fauz al-Aṣghar* (Section II on the Soul, Chapter VIII). We quote it almost in full. He writes :

"Man is not endowed with a nature which makes it possible for him to subsist alone. He cannot survive without the co-operation of others. Such is not the case with most animals. Their needs have been provided for in two ways. They have (1) an appropriate physical structure with the necessary equipment for survival. The bodies of some animals are covered with wool or feathers. Animals who have to pick up food have beaks, while those who graze have lips and teeth, and so on. (2) Secondly, animals have a natural instinct which guides them and serves as divine inspiration (*waḥī*). Guided by their natural instincts animals seek food and fodder suited to the needs of their life and avoid those things which are harmful. Some even change their abode in summer and winter. Thus by virtue of their physical equipment and under the guidance of their instincts animals can survive without the help of others. It is not necessary for them to seek the co-operation of their kind or to

acquire education and training that human beings so desperately need.

"Man is born naked and ignorant. He is neither physically nor mentally in a position to satisfy his wants by himself. He has no natural protection, nor natural tools for acquiring the objects needed by him. He is born helpless in every sense of the term. He, therefore, needs the co-operation of others for procuring the objects that satisfy his needs. During the period of his growth to maturity he must receive education and training from the adult members of society. In this important work a large number of persons must co-operate.

"But destitute and helpless as man is, he has been endowed with the greatest gift of God, namely, Reason, which enables him to overcome his handicaps fully by helping him to make different kinds of tools for exploiting the objects of nature. And what is more, he can also attain the highest good, namely, humanity.

"Man cannot survive without the co-operation of his fellow beings. His wants are many, his desires innumerable. The objects that he needs for food and drink, for clothing in summer and winter, for living and playing, and numerous other things for comfort, decoration and enjoyment are almost without limit.

"It is obvious that all these things cannot be provided by a single man nor even by a group of men. The co-operation of a number of men is needed for furnishing those things and for assisting the individual in using them. This state of affairs is quite different from the conditions in which the animals live. Man is a social being by nature because society is necessary for his life and indispensable for his survival. He must live in a community and in a city. This kind of collective living (*ijtimāʿ*) is known as civic life (*tamaddun*), no matter whether people live in tents, in houses made of clay or mud, or in magnificent buildings. Whatever may be the particular state of their civilisation, the very fact of mutual co-operation having brought them together will entitle their community life to be called *tamaddun*, and the place where they live to be called a city (*madīnah*).

"But mutual co-operation enjoins that we must help our fellow beings as they help us. This is the demand of justice. If the police or the army protects our life and property from enemies, both internal or external, it is incumbent on the rich and well-to-do of the country to make provision for their needs, so that they may be free to serve the country. All the groups and sections of society must be governed by this principle. Thus mutual co-operation is the law of life, and give-and-take is necessary for maintaining civic life and society on the basis of justice.

"As a natural corollary of the law of co-operation the ascetics and saints who neither earn their own living nor co-operate with others in any way are in fact oppressors. They have strayed far from the path of justice, since they live on the labour of society but render no service in return which is incumbent on them. One can plead in their defence that their needs are very few and that consequently their shortcomings should be condoned. But this argument is untenable. No matter how few their wants, they must render some service. On no account can they be permitted to sit idle.

"A just return, however, does not mean equality in quantity but in quality. For instance, a scientist's return for sustenance received from society may not be large in quantity but it is certainly high in quality. Similarly a good general can achieve much more with his mind than the physical sacrifice of thousands of his soldiers. In short, every man owes more to his fellows than he is aware of, and he is bound in justice to make a proper return for services rendered to him. He should, therefore, earn according to his capacity and ability. He should try to achieve the goods of the world for the sake of, and never at the cost of, the well-being of his soul. This is best done by following the Sharī'ah."

In the *Tahdhīb* (pp. 23-24) Miskawaih writes:—

"Man is social by nature, which means that he needs a city with a large population in order that he may be able to realise perfect Sa'adah. Every man because of his nature and his necessity has need of other men. He has to form a society, behave fairly towards his fellow beings and love them because they co-operatively contribute to his perfection and to the full fruition of his humanity. If this is a necessity and the demand of his nature, how can a man of good sense think of renouncing the world, and of giving up the opportunity of cultivating virtues which can be realised in society only. An ascetic who retires to a cave, or goes into a monastery, or roams from place to place cannot achieve virtue. One who does not mix with others and live in society cannot attain temperance, vigour, generosity, justice and other virtues. He only destroys through disuse his own faculties and dispositions. If he does not use his abilities and powers and leaves them to rust and wither away, he is no better than dead matter, nay he is worse than that. He may flatter himself that he is pure, sacred, just and adorned with every conceivable virtue. But in fact he is neither pure, nor just, nor has he cultivated any real virtue. People consider him virtuous because they see no vice in him, as if virtue were something negative. Virtues are never negative (*'adam*). On the contrary they are positive activities and as such they appear only when

we mix with people and live with them. Virtue is realised only in social behaviour and group activities.”

Further :—

“Man has different faculties, consequently there are numerous kinds of good. No single person can achieve them. People should co-operate and try to achieve their good. Sa‘adah is a common enterprise. An individual’s perfection is possible only through association with others. Let each play his own part, so that all may share in the common Sa‘adah, and each may attain his individual perfection. Society is in fact an organism and the well-being of this organism depends on the co-operation of all organs, and in this co-operation lies their own perfection too.” (*Tahdhīb*, p. 12)

Again, discussing the importance of the love of fellow beings and friendship he writes :—

“The roots of human love lie in natural affection (*uns*) because man is affectionate and sympathetic by nature, and not unsocial and unfriendly. The word *insān* (man) is a derivative of *uns* (natural affection) in Arabic, and not of *nisyān* (forgetfulness), as is quite mistakenly supposed. One should, however, remember that this natural affection in man is a quality which can be developed only through co-operation with his fellow beings. It should never be overlooked that co-operation alone is the source of all love.” (*Tahdhīb*, p. 116)

These rather long extracts from his books have been quoted here in order to present Miskawaih’s views in his own words. We now proceed to analyse them and sum up the result.

Society originates in the need of men for bare survival. It then expands under the necessity of the progressively multiplying needs of human beings. This gives rise to the most vital law of society, namely the law of co-operation, which is at once the condition for survival and for the provision of the higher goods of the soul. This co-operation is a necessity. It conditions, and is in turn conditioned by, a higher co-operation at the level of education and training. It is by education and training that a child is enabled to participate in the collective common enterprise.

The life of co-operation produces the love of corporate life, which does not, however, by itself generate the feeling of love and affection. It is only an additional factor supporting and strengthening a natural tendency which is already inherent in man.

A social life which is thus brought into being by the action of the

twin forces of necessary co-operation and natural love is the indispensable condition for still higher co-operation necessary for achieving self-perfection or perfection of true humanity in man. This rational co-operation, as we may call it, is the end of society and the *raison d'être* of its being. Society is the essential condition for the cultivation of virtue, and social co-operation is the only method for achieving full Sa'ādah. And finally society is an integral part of that higher life of the soul which, we should remember, is called friendship. "Society", as Aristotle said, "originates in the need for livelihood, but it exists for the sake of life."²

In the text quoted above from the *Tahdhīb* we see that society has been called an organism. This is only to emphasise the interdependence of individuals in a society and the unity of the social organism. It does not serve as a criterion for building a social pyramid whose lower rungs may be so arranged as to serve the purpose of the first *Ra'īs* (the Head of the State), as it does in al-Fārābī's ideal city.³ Al-Fārābī's conception of the ideal state is much more organismic. The Supreme Head of his state is the arbiter of individual destinies. He not only determines the status of various classes of the society, their rights and duties, but also their ends and objectives.⁴ In Miskawaih the state does not dictate to its individuals their ends and their particular forms of happiness. On the whole he is more democratic and a better protagonist of individual freedom.

THE STATE AND GOVERNMENT

A society having such ideals and functions is bound by the very logic of its existence to develop into a state. The highest end of moral and intellectual perfection cannot be fully realised unless there is a recognised political authority to enforce those conditions which are indispensable for such realization. Social co-operation is, after all, an activity in which individuals are free to participate. Their freedom may even hamper the process of co-operation. The necessity of a government, therefore, is obvious. It is more likely that uncontrolled and undirected social co-operation may thwart the realization of Sa'ādah rather than facilitate it. This will be clear if we consider the necessary conditions which social co-operation must fulfil in order to achieve its ends. (1) The community of co-operators must work rightly and rationally. (2) Its members must have correct knowledge of the needs of society. (3) Every one of them should make his contribution in that field in which he can

best serve himself and the society. (4) Equality and justice must be observed in the exchange of services. And (5) the material goods necessary for physical and moral needs must be adequately provided. If society fails to achieve these norms it cannot be successful in achieving the highest end of life. These norms are so vital that they cannot be left to the uncontrolled activity of the individuals. If they are, social justice will be undermined and moral activity seriously impaired, both by the internal forces of disruption and by external enemies. To save society from falling an easy prey to such elements, it is necessary to have political authority. The state is, therefore, a moral necessity, an indispensable agency for ensuring social justice.⁵

The function of the government, however, is not protective alone. It has to perform two more important functions, one of educating the people to think and act rightly, and the other of looking after their productive activities and other creative occupations.⁶ That the function of the government is to co-ordinate various enterprises and individual undertakings, can be easily deduced from the law of co-operation. However, Miskawaih did not make such a deduction. It is far too advanced a view to be expected from him.

The state should not dictate the particular way of Sa'ādah that one has to follow. The individual himself should make his choices and order his life. The state should assist him but leave him free to choose. It should interfere only when social justice and co-operation are jeopardised. The essence of social justice is equality (*muṣāwāt*). The general rules governing its determination have been already discussed. The more elaborate code of rules concerning it can, however, be found in the law of the Sharī'ah.⁷ The function of the government, therefore, is to implement the law of the Sharī'ah.

Besides these basic duties, the government should look after the moral life of its people. But it should not play the role of a school master in enforcing moral discipline. It should strive for the cause of unity and foster the feeling of mutual love (*mawaddah*). This cannot be possible unless people think and act rightly, form correct opinions about their actions, and have true beliefs and firm convictions. This is possible only through divinely revealed religions.⁸

Miskawaih finds a government organised and run on these lines in the early days of Islam. The government of the Prophet and the early Caliphs who immediately followed him is his ideal. This type of government constitutes not only the ideal but the only lawful government. Firstly, because no other government can enforce the Sharī'at, and

secondly real sovereignty belongs to God. The ruler is only the protector of the Sharī'ah, his authority is subject to the authority of God.⁹

The Sharī'ah is an integral part of the divine religion, consequently obedience to government is also a religious duty. He who violates the laws of the government sins not only against the government, but also against God. *Al-Khilāfah* enables men to rise higher in spiritual attainments, and purifies their morals.¹⁰

The ideal of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is found in *al-khilāfah* and more perfectly in the government of the Prophet himself. It can be expressed in one word as 'familial.' The ruler is the father and the people are his children.¹¹

Miskawaih's view of the state is theocratic. Religion and the state could not be conceived as parallel institutions by a Muslim like him. But it is essentially different from the Christian theocratic government of the Middle Ages in which the Ruler directly derived his authority from God, and claimed infallibility. Again, Miskawaih is far from the Fārābian conception of the state which is a strange compound of the *Republic* of Plato and the Shi'ites dream of an infallible *Imām*.¹²

Miskawaih's conception of the Islamic state reminds us of his great contemporary al-Māwardī (d. 1058 A.D.), one of the acutest political and legal minds of Islam.

Al-Māwardī's conception of the state¹³ is similar to Miskawaih's, the only difference being that al-Māwardī has discussed in detail what Miskawaih has only outlined. We can clearly discern two parallel currents in the history of Muslim political thought. One is more closely related to the government of the Prophet and the early caliphate. It aims to revive the pristine ideal. The other trend incorporates diverse elements stemming from Greek and Iranian sources. The former is represented by the four renowned jurists, and later by al-Māwardī and al-Ghazālī. The latter has as its representatives al-Fārābī, Kai Kā'ūs and others.¹⁴ In spite of being a philosopher Miskawaih's views are akin to those held by the former group.

Lastly, we may note an important point about the change of government. Miskawaih is not an advocate of the passive acceptance of evil. He emphasises the need for political reform and social action for restoring conditions that are indispensable for the attainment of collective Sa'ādah.

When a condition of political decadence sets in, people indulge in sensuous acts, the laws of the Sharī'ah are violated, and it becomes progressively difficult to know the right from the wrong. In short, when the order that the Prophet sought to establish through divine regulations is upset, then it is high time for reviving the religious spirit, for imparting the knowledge of truth, and for establishing a new and just government. This is called *Tajdīd* in religious terminology.¹⁵

CHAPTER IX

Conclusion

IN the conception of Sa'ādah that Miskawaih has expounded all the activities of life find their place. The highest place is given to the activity of thought, the acquisition of knowledge and the contemplation of the spiritual realities, particularly God. The performance of right acts or the cultivation of virtue comes next. It is an essential part of Sa'ādah, without which Sa'ādah cannot be complete. It is, however, a preparation for the higher life of contemplation, compared to which it has a lower value. The goods of fortune or the body occupy a still lower place. They are only the means to, or the conditions of, the acquisition of knowledge and virtue, which are not, however, completely dependent on their existence. One may attain to the highest happiness even with a minimum of these. These pleasures of the body have no place in Sa'ādah except as necessary diversion from higher activities which the soul cannot pursue indefinitely; the sole purpose of pleasure is to recuperate the soul for renewed activity. The artistic activity is not mentioned in this conception of Sa'ādah. The only inadequate reference to it is in the form of self-adornment.

This conception of the ethical ideal was also held, as we have seen, by al-Kindī and al-Fārābī. In fact it was the common heritage of Greek ethics as interpreted by the neo-Platonic commentators and writers. Although Miskawaih profusely quotes from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, he does not arrive at the more humane and balanced view of Sa'ādah that it presents. He also knows that the Shari'ah of Islam has not prohibited or stigmatised the enjoyment of pleasure yet he confers only a negative value on pleasure. The Shari'ah's attitude towards pleasure he interprets as a kind of permission for a lesser good (*rukhsat*).

The factors determining this conception of Sa'ādah were many. In the first place it was due to his neo-Platonic conception which bifurcated life into the activity of the soul and the activity of the body, identified true humanity with the former, and confined the higher and most real activity of the soul to contemplation. In the second place, it was due to Miskawaih's misconception that the tract on '*The Virtues and Vices*' was a genuine work of Aristotle, which in fact was a work of the century before

or the century after Christ, and attempted to reconcile Peripatetic with Platonic morals.¹ Miskawaih often quotes from this book. Its influence on his conception of Sa'ādah was great. It greatly helped him in working out a synthesis of Aristotelian and Platonic ideals. In the third place, the influence of contemporary ṣūfism might also be detected. Although he makes no explicit reference to any ṣūfī in this concern, he has a regard for their high virtuous life and spiritual attainments. There are references to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī in the *Tahdhīb*.² In *al-Ḥikmat al-Khālīdah* he has included the sayings of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī,³ Owais al-Qarnī,⁴ Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī,⁵ Bishr Ibn al-Hārith,⁶ al-Junaid,⁷ Shiblī,⁸ Ma'rūf al-Karkhī,⁹ Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī¹⁰ and others.

The philosophers of his time did not remain unaffected by ṣūfism. His friend Abul Ḥasan al-Āmirī wrote and lectured on philosophical and ethical subjects. The specimen of his teachings that is incorporated in *al-Ḥikmat al-Khālīdah*,¹¹ reveals an attempt to demolish the artificial boundaries of terms and concepts that lay between the ethical ideal of the philosophers and the ṣūfīs. For instance, he employed the term *maqū-māt* (stations) of the ṣūfīs to convey the idea of degrees of Sa'ādah, a term which also occurs in Miskawaih's *Al-Fauz*.¹² And lastly, as already referred, it was also due to Miskawaih's strong reaction against his early life of pleasure-seeking and against the degenerated morals of his age.

These were, I believe, the real factors in determining Miskawaih's conception of Sa'ādah. Although he has offered an argument to support this conception, but, as we shall see, the argument does not necessarily lead us to it. This argument which he very elaborately formulated is quoted in full on pages 73-74 of this work. Once formulated by him the argument occurs in various treatises on ethics by philosophers as well as ṣūfīs. As already noted, it has been borrowed from Plato or from Aristotle who reproduced it almost verbatim from his master. We shall examine it in detail.

The argument may be divided into two parts. The first part is that every being or object whether in nature or in art, as part or whole, has some purpose and that its perfection consists in the realization of that purpose. The second part of the argument is that the purpose of a being lies in its distinctive function, and not in that function which it has in common with other beings. For, it is the distinctive function alone which it can perform or perform in the best way that must constitute the reason for its creation and the purpose of its existence.

So far as the first part of the argument is concerned it can be easily conceded that every being or object has some purpose and that the realization of that purpose is its perfection, its highest excellence or good,

But how can we know what is the purpose of an object or being? It is for this problem that the second part of the argument has been built up. As far as simple objects are concerned their proper function is not difficult to discover. It is clear, for instance, that the excellence of a sword consists in its ability to cut swift and deep, and of a pen in its ability to write smoothly. It is also clear in the case of the various organs of a body or the parts of a whole. The proper function of the eye is to see and of the ear to hear, and their excellence or perfection consists in their ability to see clearly or hear quickly. But it is not so clear in the case of a composite being considered in its entirety. What is the purpose of a dog or a cat, for instance?

To find out the purpose of man is still more difficult. The idea of distinctive function provides no clear answer. Miskawaih considers it obvious that what distinguishes man from other animals is his reason. The distinctive function of man, therefore, is the exercise of reason. Supposing the distinctive function of man is the exercise of reason, the first question that arises is what do we mean by the term. The exercise of reason may mean (i) the acquisition of knowledge, or (ii) the rational ordering of desires, impulses and conduct, or (iii) the creation of beautiful and useful objects according to rational norms. There is no reason why each of the above should not be considered to be the distinctive function of man, and consequently be included into the purpose for which he has been created. But if every one of these activities is considered to be the distinctive function of man, there will remain no function which can be considered to be common. For, these activities combined together encompass the whole of human life. There is no denying the fact that rational knowledge is the distinctive function of man, but so is every other function that is according to the dictates of reason. The distinction of man not only lies in acquiring knowledge, but also in the manner he performs other functions which are common to other animals. Therefore all moral and productive activity is a part of human purpose as is philosophical inquiry or rational contemplation. Even the rational pursuit of pleasure is a part of human purpose. This defeats the end for which the argument has been advanced.

Secondly, if we suppose that the acquisition of rational knowledge alone is the distinctive function, the question still remains unanswered why we should confine the purpose of man to this distinctive function, and exclude the common functions from its orbit. The argument which Miskawaih puts forward is this. If the purpose of man were something that was also performed by other animals then the creation of man

would be useless. So the purpose of man must be limited to the acquisition of rational knowledge. But this argument would be true only if the purpose of man were limited exclusively to those functions which he shared in common with other animals. But in case the common functions are taken along with the distinctive function and the combination as a whole is considered to be the purpose of man, the charge of uselessness is removed. Moreover, in the combination the two parts do not remain as separate and independent entities, but are transformed into a unity that we call humanity. To separate them is to shatter the conception of man. Man is the angel and the brute combined, once this combination is broken he is neither.

We may conclude that the order in which different activities of life take their place in Miskawaih's conception of Sa'ādah was determined by his metaphysical ideas and his social environment, not by any independent argument.

In all his works Miskawaih tries to abide by Islamic beliefs and ideals. His *Al-Fauz* is an attempt to understand and interpret Islamic beliefs in philosophical terms. In the *Tahdhīb* and *Al-Sa'ādah*, too, he tries to work out an Islamic ethics. Whatever may be his actual achievement the genuineness of his purpose cannot be questioned. In the course of our exposition and examination of his ethics we have in several places discussed the Islamic nature of his various ideas. At this stage we shall endeavour to assess the system as a whole.

The first thing to be noted is his basic approach to ethics. His view that the problem of human ideals and values can be intelligible only when they are studied in the wider perspective of the nature and destiny of man, the place he occupies in the total scheme of the universe, and the relationship that obtains between him and God—is most fundamental to the understanding of Islamic ideals and values. This has been a common belief of all the eminent thinkers of Islam in the past. In modern times, too, this idea has been clearly elucidated by many a writer.¹³

This approach of Miskawaih is important, though not the details of his philosophical system. His conception of God, for instance, does not highlight that intimate personal relationship which is the very spirit of Islamic morality. The deep sense of duty to God for right conduct, and the consequent fear of incurring His displeasure, which is so predominant an element in Muslim consciousness, is difficult to develop in view of his conception of a transcendental impersonal God.

It is partly due to such a conception of God that the idea of duty was not incorporated in the philosophical ethics of Islam.

Secondly, the idea that man has an essential nature and that his good or Sa'adah consists in realising that nature is also in fundamental agreement with Islamic teachings. The Qur'ān says : "So set thy purpose for religion with sincerity. (This is) the nature (framed) of Allāh, on which He hath created man. There is no altering the creation of Allāh. That is the right religion, but most men know not."¹⁴ It is this essential nature of man that is the basis of the uniformity of beliefs and ideals of all religions that have been revealed in the past in different periods and regions of the world, as it is claimed by the Qur'ān : "He hath ordained for you that religion which he commended unto Noah, and that which we inspire in thee (Muḥammad), and that which we commended unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus."¹⁵

But the idea that the highest function of man consists in the acquisition of knowledge, that virtue and right action are subservient to it, that pleasure has a negative value, have no Islamic authority.

Thirdly, the conception that morality is essentially social and that an ordered state or society is a condition of perfect virtuous life, which in turn urges the individual to reform and reconstruct society according to the right principles, is perfectly Islamic. Miskawaih's objection to the indifference to, or withdrawal from society, is in complete harmony with the Islamic ideal. Similarly his conceptions of the sovereignty of God translatable practically in the supremacy of the Shari'ah, and of the enthronement of Shari'ah as the arbiter of social justice, reflect the traditional view of the jurists and legists of Islam.

He has, however, interpreted the conception of the *khilāfah* (vicegerency) of man under the influence of neo-Platonic metaphysics. The Intelligence is said to be the First Vicegerent of God. The human reason as emanating from the Intelligence has also been considered the vicegerent of God, whose function has been said to consist in the acquisition of knowledge, the contemplation of the spiritual realities and the imitation of God.

The conception of the imitation of God (*al-Tashabbuh bi'-Allāh*) that has been put forward by Miskawaih is very delicately balanced. He calls this the divine life (*al-Ḥayāt al-Ilāhīyah*) of man. What is implied in this conception is that the best life of man is contemplative, that a divine man is absorbed in his world of thought which is his greatest delight, that his virtue is its own end, that his interest in society and his efforts for its well-being and perfection are perfectly altruistic. Except the glorification of the contemplative life there is nothing in this conception

that may contradict the teachings of the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet.

The influence of Islam on Miskawaih's conception of various moral virtues is more conspicuous. The ideal of courage as patient struggle for noble and pious ends, the enlargement of the field of temperance, the extension of justice to all humanity, the emphasis on the purity of motive, the performance of acts for the pleasure of God, the conception of love inspired by genuine altruism and of friendship unstained by any selfish motive, display the deep influence of Islam on his thought.

The formal conception of virtue, however, is Greek. In his doctrine of the mean Miskawaih is influenced by Aristotle. This idea has passed into the annals of Muslim ethics as something established and unquestionable. Al-Ghazālī and al-Dawwānī have sought to provide the authority of the Qur'an and the Sunnah for this doctrine. But this is a mistake. The tradition of the Prophet that the best actions are those that are moderate,¹⁶ is, if authentic, only a rule for general guidance. It is not the criterion of any right action, or the distinctive characteristic of every virtue. If virtue were the mean, then the Prophet's practice of borrowing money when he was already in debt in order to spend it on the poor, or his prayers and supplications all the night over till his legs were swollen, or Abū Bakr's donation of every piece of money he had in his house to the war of Tabūk, can hardly be conceived of as virtuous. It is unnecessary to multiply such instances. The real purpose of the above tradition or similar verses of the Qur'an is what we have already stated in the examination of the doctrine. Their emphasis is on the observance of balance and harmony in the cultivation of virtue and in the gratification of desires, in the development of faculties and in the performance of different obligations. This is also the real import of the Greek concept of *metriotes* (moderation). Aristotle changed it into *mesotes*¹⁷ (mean) and treated it as the distinctive characteristic of virtue. Consequently he involved himself in unnecessary difficulties.

In elaborating his ethical system Miskawaih has drawn upon diverse sources. The underlying psychology and the metaphysical base is neo-Platonic, the conception of Sa'ādah is a unique combination of Platonism, Aristotelianism and Islam, the conception of virtue is Greek in form but mostly Islamic in content. The conception of love and friendship is Miskawaih's own. His conception of society and state is free from Persian influences, and exemplifies the idea of Islamic *khilāfah*. Indian influence is very insignificant. Only in the discussion of the manners of friendship does he refer¹⁸ to the *Kalīlah wa Dimnah*. In the treatment of vices and the

preservation of virtues he is influenced by Abū Bakr al-Rāzī.¹⁹ He also quotes from Galen, al-Kindī and others. But the system he has built out of so many diverse elements exhibits a unity and consistency which is unique.

To bring the unique character of Miskawaih's ethics into full relief we shall compare it with the ethical system of St. Augustine (d. 430 A.D.), who strove, like him, to interpret and reconstruct in terms of neo-Platonic Philosophy the ethical ideals of his own religion. The best activity for both of them is contemplative, they equally believe in the supremacy of understanding over will. God is the supreme object of this activity, and His contemplation combined with the most sublime pleasure that follows from it, is the highest happiness. The activity of virtue is considered to be a lower kind of happiness.

After this basic agreement they differ in details. St. Augustine places the knowledge of God completely out of the reach of human effort. The sin of Adam condemned every individual to ignorance and misery, from which he can only be redeemed by the unmerited grace of God.²⁰ Miskawaih, too, considers the highest knowledge of God as His Grace. But since he does not subscribe to the doctrine of the original sin, he does not believe that the knowledge of God is unmerited. For him it is the natural culmination of a sustained contemplative activity. To Augustine God is revealed through an inner light in an ecstatic rapture.²¹ But although in Miskawaih the nature of the highest experience is not quite clear, it is more akin to an intellectual gaze on the Divine.

Because of his emphasis on the unmerited grace of God, the distinction between the higher happiness and the lower happiness becomes very conspicuous in Augustine. The condition of the higher happiness is faith, not natural wisdom. Faith springs from love which is installed by God in the heart of man; from their combination springs hope, a joyful yearning towards the ultimate and perfect fruition of the object of love. Thus the Paulian triad of theological virtues of love, faith and hope are the basis of higher happiness.²² Consequently Augustine exalts them above the Platonic virtues of prudence, temperance, courage and justice, which constitute the lower happiness. Miskawaih does not recognise any set of theological virtues as distinguished from moral and intellectual virtues. Consequently the relation between higher and lower kinds of happiness is more intimate in him.

For Augustine the supreme and true goal consists in asceticism, renunciation of the world, withdrawal from social life, and imitation of Christ. The monastic life is, for him, the closest approximation to the Christian ideal. For Miskawaih on the contrary perfect happiness is

attainable only in society. Virtue is essentially social. And this, he believes, is the true spirit of Islamic Sharī'ah.

Miskawaih's is the first attempt in Islam to work out an elaborate system of ethics. Before him ethical ideas were discussed but only as a prelude to the wider problems of politics or as corollaries to theological issues. He made ethics a discipline by itself. Before him the ethical ideas were included in the literature on politics, but after him the whole practical philosophy including politics (*tadbīr-e-Mumlikat*) and the science of household (*tadbīr-e-Manzil*) came to be included under the title of Ethics. *Akhlāq-e-Nāsiri* and *Akhlāq-e-Jalāli* illustrate this point. Although Miskawaih entertained no such idea, his influence in producing this change cannot be over-emphasised.

Miskawaih exercised a tremendous influence on subsequent development of ethics in Islam. It was used as an indispensable source by al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 A.D.) in his *Mīzān al-'Amal* and a section of *Iḥyā' Ulūm al-Dīn*. His views on character, on child education, on the ways of knowing one's own vices and ridding the soul of its diseases, have been very much influenced by Miskawaih. Of his debt to Miskawaih for the conception of Sa'adah and the argument that he employs for it, we have already made a mention.

The first section of the *Ethics* of Naṣiruddīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 1274 A.D.) which deals with ethics is almost a translation into Persian of Miskawaih's *Tahdhīb*. In the preface of his book al-Ṭūsī writes: "The section of this book that deals with ethics will contain a systematic summary of the book of the learned teacher Abū 'Alī Miskawaih."²¹ Al-Ṭūsī's book, however, is more systematic and free from non-ethical diversions. It held its place in restricted academic circles until the fifteen century, when the *Ethics* of Jalāluddīn al-Dawwānī (d. 1501 A.D.) appeared on the scene. The *Akhlāq-e-Jalāli* follows *Akhlāq-e-Nāsiri* very closely, and quotes profusely from the Qur'ān, the traditions of the Prophet, and from Sūfī writers particularly al-Ghazālī. After al-Dawwānī the character of ethics was completely changed. Philosophical discussions were altogether discarded, and fables, stories and poems took their place, as we see in the *Gulīzān* of Sa'dī.

References and Notes

CHAPTER I

1. Miskawaih, *Tajārib al-Umam*, ed. Prof. Margoliouth, Vol. I, pp. 366-377; Ibn al-Athīr, *Tārīkh al-Kāmil*, Vol. VIII, p. 103.

2. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, English tr. Ṣalāḥuddīn Khudā Bakhsh and D. S. Margoliouth, Patna, 1937, pp. 1-2.

3. Miskawaih, *Tajārib al-Umam*, Vol. I, p. 47.

4. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, p. 4.

5. Ibn al-Athīr, *Tārīkh al-Kāmil* Vol. VIII, p. 304.

6. When in 935 A.D. the Caliph al-Rāḍī bi-Allāh (934-40 A.D.) found it impossible to run the administration because of the stoppage of revenue from the provinces, he appointed Ibn Rā'iq, a rebel revenue farmer, as Amīr al-Umarā. This encouraged a number of adventurers who strove to secure the office for themselves. Ibn Rā'iq had a rival in his own general Bajkam, who defied his authority and established himself in Wāsiṭ. Similarly the two Brīdī brothers Abū 'Abdullāh and Yūsuf, established themselves in Baṣrah and Ahwāz. Ibn Rā'iq, Bajkam and the Brīdīs fought among themselves for supremacy and all in turn obtained their chances to rule in Baghdād.

7. Abū Ja'far b. Shīrẓād was the secretary to the Turkish commander Tūzūn who succeeded the Ḥamadānīd Nāṣir al-Dawlah as Amīr al-Umarā' in 942 A.D. Tūzūn died in 945 A.D. and Ibn Shīrẓād succeeded as Amīr. He soon alienated the people by resorting to indiscriminate exactions in order to obtain the funds he required; whereupon the governor of Wāsiṭ invited Aḥmad b. Buwayh to come to Baghdād and replace Ibn Shīrẓād.

8. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, pp. 6-7.

9. *Ibid*, p. 7.

10. *Tajārib al-Umam*, Vol. II, p. 143; *Ibn al-Athīr, Tārīkh al-Kāmil* Vol. VIII, p. 165. For al-Muhallatī see note 98.

11. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, p. 23.

12. *Ibid*, p. 23.

13. *Ibid*, p. 24.

14. *Ibid*, p. 25.

15. *Ibid*, p. 28.

16. Dr. Maḥṣūllāh Kabīr, *The Buwayhid Dynasty of Baghdad, Indo Iranicā*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, pp. 35-39.

17. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, pp. 41-42.

18. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 41.

19. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 45.

20. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 45.

21. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 46.

22. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 48.

23. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, p. 124.

24. *Ibid*, p. 27.

25. *Ibid*, pp. 125-127.

26. Abū ‘Abd-Allāh al-Ḥusain b. Aḥmad b. Sa‘dān was appointed as wazīr by Ṣamsām al-Dawlah in 983 A.D. He remained in office for two years. He was very fond of philosophy, and would discuss philosophical problems with Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī and Abū Sulaimān al-Manṭiqī. Besides, a number of eminent men of literature, science and philosophy such as Ibn ‘Ubaid al-Kātib, Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, the poet, Abu’l-Wafā, the mathematician, Abu’l-Qāsim al-Ahwazī, Ibn Shāhwaih and Miskawih assembled in his meetings and participated in discussions. They all enjoyed his patronage. Abū Ḥaiyān has preserved these discussions with the wazīr in his *Al-Imtā‘ wa’l-Muānasah*.

27. Abul Qāsim Hibatullāh b. ‘Alī b. Ja‘far, al-‘Ijlī, commonly known as Ibn Mākūlā was born in 975 A.D. His family originally belonged to Jarbadhāqān, a place near Isphahān. In 1032 A.D. Jalāl-al-Dawlah took him as his wazīr. Ibn Mākūlā devised a scheme for better government, and put down the rebellion of the Turkish soldiery. But in the following year the Turks again revolted, consequently he was dismissed. He came to wazirate once again in 1033 A.D., but was replaced by Abū Sa‘d b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm in 1034. In 1036 he was put in prison at Hit, where he died in 1038 A.D.

28. Dr. Maḥṣūllāh Kabīr, *The Buwayhid Dynasty of Baghdad, Indo Iranica*, Vol. VIII, 2, p. 56.

29. Fakhr al-Mulk, Abū Ghālīb ‘Alī b. Muḥammad (965-1021 A.D.) was one of the three great wazīrs (Ismā‘īl b. ‘Abbād and Ibn al-‘Amīd being the other two) of the Buwayhid dynasty. He was the wazīr of Bahā’ al-Dawlah, and also of his son Sulṭān al-Dawlah. In addition to his ability as a great wazīr he was also gifted with a fine literary taste which attracted a number of poets and men of learning to his patronage. He was put to death by the orders of Sulṭān al-Dawlah in

1016 A.D. After his death, his huge treasures and weapons were confiscated by the Amīr and his relations were put in prison.

30. Tāj al-Mulk, Abū Ghālib, al-Ḥasan b. Maṣṣūr was appointed wazīr by Sulṭān al-Dawlah in 1018 A.D. He seems to have been retained in office by Musharrif al-Dawlah when the latter succeeded Sulṭān al-Dawlah in 1021. But in this very year Tāj al-Mulk was put to death by the mutineers.

31. Dr. Maḥṣullāh Kabīr, *The Buwayhid Dynasty of Baghdad, Indo Iranica*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 58.

32. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 58.

33. Abū'l-Faḍl was appointed wazīr in 967. In the first year of his wazirate he was remarkably successful, but he could not pursue his fiscal policy due to the opposition of his unscrupulous rivals. He was deposed in 969. After some years he was again appointed as wazīr. This time he completely failed to manage the revenues, and resorted to wholesale confiscation of property and extortion of money from merchants and craftsmen. People began to pray for his removal. After two and a half years he was replaced by Ibn Baqīyah.

34. Dr. Maḥṣullāh Kabīr, *The Buwayhid Dynasty of Baghdad, Indo Iranica*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 60.

35. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. 'Ubaidullah b. Yaḥyā b. Khaqān was appointed wazīr in 911 A.D. He was quite incapable of the office, and within two years was deposed and arrested.

36. Miskawaih, *Tajārib al-Umam*, Vol. I, p. 23.

37. Maḥmūd Ghannāwī Zuhairī, *Al-Adab fī ḡill-e-Banī Buwayh*, Maṭba'at al-Amānah, 58 Shāre' al-Fajlah, Egypt, 1949, p. 34.

38. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, p. 95.

39. Ibn Baqīyah was made wazīr by Bakhtiyār in 972 in place of Abul Faḍl, although he was not qualified even for 'carrying an inkpot in front of a wazīr.' He began to practise such tyranny and injustice in his general dealings as to make the misdeeds of Abul Faḍl pale into insignificance. The consequence was an alarming increase in lawlessness and banditry, which quickly reduced the provinces to ruin.

40. Dr. Maḥṣullāh Kabīr, *The Buwayhid Dynasty of Baghdad, Indo Iranica*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 60.

41. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 61.

42. Aḥmad Amīn, *Zuḥr al-Islām*, Maṭba'at al-Nahḍah al-Miṣriyah, Qairo, 1946, Vol. II, p. 268.

43. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 267.

44. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 13.

45. Ibn al-Athīr, *Tārīkh al-Kāmil*, Vol. IX, p. 98.
46. Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh-e-Baghdād*, p.1931, Vol. I, pp. 100-104.
47. Aḥmad Amīn, *Ẓuhr al-Islām*, Vol. I, p. 103.
48. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā, Abul Ḥasan Ibn al-Furāt was born at Nahrwān. He was thrice appointed wazīr by Al-Muqtadir. Every time he was arrested and imprisoned. The third time he was executed and his body was thrown into the Dajla. He was also a poet.
49. Aḥmad Amīn, *Ẓuhr al-Islām*, Vol. I, pp. 103-104.
50. *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 104.
51. *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 115.
52. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-'Abbās, Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī was born at Shīrāz (or Nīsāpūr). Later he went to Baghdād. Finally he went to Rayy and associated himself with the wazīr Ibn al-'Amīd and then with al-Ṣāḥib b. 'Abbād. He, however, did not like them and soon broke away from them. He was a mystic, a philosopher, and a great literary genius. The famous among his books are *Al-Imtā' wa'l-Mu'ānasah Al-Baṣā'ir wa'l-Dhakḥā'ir* and *Al-Muqūbasāt*. He died about 1010 A.D.
53. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtā' wa al-Mu'ānasah*, ed. Aḥmad Amīn and Aḥmad al-Zain, Qairo, 1953, preface
54. Abū Sulaimān Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir b. Bahrām came from a family of Sajistān. He lived in Baghdād. Due to leprosy he could not visit the Amīrs and wazīrs and remained in his house where various scholars of Baghdād would assemble and hold discussions. Among them were 'Yahyā b. 'Adī, Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, Miskawaih and others. He wrote among other books *Ṣuwān al-Ḥikmah* and a treatise on *Al-Muḥarik Al-Awwal*. 'Aḥud-al-Dawlah had great respect for him. He died about 990 A.D.
55. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtā' wa'l-Mu'ānasah*, Vol. I, p. 31.
56. Aḥmad Amīn, *Ẓuhr al-Islām* Vol. I, pp. 116-119.
57. *Ibid*, Vol. II, pp. 241-244.
58. Al-Maqdisī, *Aḥsan al-Taqāsim*, Leiden, 1906, p. 113.
59. Dr. Iḥsān 'Abbās, *Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī*, Bairut, 1956, p. 32.
60. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, p. 6
61. Aḥmad Amīn, *Ẓuhr al-Islām*, Vol. II, p. 32.
62. The number of the eunuchs alone in the service of al-Muqtadir (908-32 A.D.) was 11,000. Aḥmad Amīn, *Ẓuhr al-Islām*, Vol. II, p. 13.
63. Muḥammad Ghannāwī al-Zuhairī, *Al-Adab fī Zill-e Banī Bawwāh*, pp. 266-274; Aḥmad Amīn, *Ẓuhr al-Islām*, Vol. I, pp. 136-40.

64. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, Abū Bakr Ibn Quray'ah (914-978 A.D.) was one of the Qāḍīs of Baghdad. He was renowned for his ready wit, and would answer any question put to him. His answers were collected in a book that became very popular. He was one of the *nudamā'* (fellow-drinkers) of the wazīr al-Muhallabī. Later Bakhtiyār took him as his own *nadīm*.

65. Abū Muḥammad 'Ubaidullāh b. Ma'rūf was born in the year 918 A.D. and occupied a prominent place in the politics of the day. In 956 he was appointed judge for West Baghdad, and in 969 for Eastern Baghdad as well. In the following year, he was made the head of the judges of Baghdad. The Caliph al-Ṭā'e' (974-91 A.D.) offered him the wazīrate but he refused. He was arrested by 'Aḍud al-Dawlah and put in prison in Fars. Later he was released.

66. 'Alī b. Muḥammad Abul Fahm, Dā'ūd b. Ibrāhīm b. Tamīm Abul Qāsim al-Tanūkhī was born at Antioch. In the prime of youth he came to Baghdad and was appointed the Qāḍī of Baṣra and Ahwāz. After a long service as a Qāḍī he returned to Baghdad and joined the circle of al-Muhallabī's associates. He was also a poet. He died in 953 A.D.

67. *Yatīmat al-Dahr* Vol. III, pp. 335-336.

68. Miskawih, *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, al-Matb'at al-Ḥusainiyah, Egypt, 1329 A.H. p. 42.

69. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, p. 418-424.

70. Miskawih, *Al-Ḥawāmīl wa'l-Shawāmīl*, ed. Aḥmad Amīn and Saiyed Aḥmad Ṣāqar, Qairo, 1951, pp. 251-253.

71. Amīr 'Alī, *A History of the Saracenes*, Macmillan and Co., Martins Street, London, 1949, p. 292.

72. Ibn al-Athīr, *Tārīkh al-Kūmil*, Vol. VIII, p. 229.

73. Ḥusain b. Aḥmad b. Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥajjāj was a famous poet of Baghdad. He enjoyed the patronage of the wazīr al-Muhallabī, of 'Aḍud al-Dawlah, of Ibn 'Abbād and of Ibn al-'Amīd. He died in Baghdad in 1001 A.D. where he was buried.

74. Dr. Maḥmūd Kabīr, *The Buwayhīd Dynasty of Baghdad Indo Iranica*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, pp. 44.

75. *Ibid*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, p. 45. For a detailed study of this immoral trend in the literature of the age see Maḥmūd Ghannāwī's *Al-Adab fī Zill-e-Banī-Buwayh*, pp. 284-290.

76. For the details see Ghulām Murtaḍā, *Islāmī Dunyā Chowthī Ṣadī Hījri men*, Allahabad, 1962.

77. Al-Ḥallāj, Abu'l—Mughīth al-Ḥusain b. Maṣṣūr, a Persian

mystic and theologian was born about 858 A.D. at al-Tur near al-Baidā' (Fars). He was the grand-son of a fire-worshipper. From 873 to 897 he lived in retirement with ṣūfī teachers, Junaid and others. Then he broke with them and went out into the world to preach asceticism and mysticism. On his return from Mecca to Baghdad in 908 disciples rapidly gathered round him. He was then accused of being a charlatan by the Mu'tazilah, ex-communicated by a *towqīf* of the Imāmiyah and a *fatwā* of the Zāhirīyah. He was put on the pillory in 913. He remained for eight years in prison at Baghdad. After a seven months trial on a fatwa approved by the Mālikī Qāḍī Abū 'Umar he was flogged, mutilated and finally burnt in 922 A.D.

78. Abul Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ash'arī was born at Baṣra in 260 A.H. (873-74 A.D.) Until his 40th year he was a zealous pupil of the Mu'tazilite theologian al-Jubbā'ī. In a discussion with his teacher on the fitness of God's predetermination he disagreed with him and went his own way. Henceforth he worked out his own system and founded the orthodox scholastic *kalām*. He spent the closing years of his life in Baghdad and died there in the year 935. Among his books that have survived the best known are *Al-Ibūnah*, *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn* and *Kitāb al-Luma'*.

79. Muḥammad b. al-Ṭaiyib b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far Abū Bakr al-Baḡillānī was born at Baṣra in 950 A.D. He lived at Baghdad where he died in 1013. He was the head of the Ash'arīte theologians of his age. He was the first man to elaborate the doctrines of al-Ash'arī and render them into a system. He wrote many books, famous among them are *Al-Tamhīd* and *I'jāz al-Qur'ān*.

80. Adam Metz, *The Renaissance of Islam*, p. 205.

81. Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī was born at Ṭūs in 1058 A.D. He first turned to the study of *fīqh* and theology, but soon broke away from *taqlīd*, and began to investigate theological differences before he was twenty. He later took up the study of philosophy, but that too did not satisfy his urge for indubitable knowledge. In fact he began to doubt every thing. After two months period of complete scepticism he emerged with an intuitive certainty of religious truths. Henceforth he became the exponent of the mystic way of knowledge and life, which he believed to be the only method for the attainment of the highest progress. He died in 1111 A.D.

82. Al-Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl*, Eng. tr. Montgomery, Watt., George Allen and Unwin, London, 1953, pp. 28-29.

83. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtāʿ wa'l-Muʿānasah*, Vol. I, p. 142.

84. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *al-Muqābasāt*, Bombay, p. 42.

85. Muḥammad b. Zakarīya Abū Bakr al-Rāzī was born in 865 A.D. at Rayy. At the age of thirty he went to Baghdad and devoted himself to alchemy. Then he took up the study of medicine and philosophy. He was a very prolific writer; the number of his books and tracts reaches 232. *Al-Ḥawī* is his most famous book on medicine. He was the head of the hospital at Rayy and of the one at Baghdad. He died in 925 A.D.

86. Aḥmad b. ʿAbdullāh b. Subḥān al-Muʿarrī the philosopher-poet was born at Muʿarrā al-Nuʿarrī in 973 A.D. While four he lost his eyesight. At the age of eleven he began to compose poems. At twenty-five he went to Baghdād, but after a year and half returned to his native place where he stayed for the rest of his life. Al-Muʿarrī was a great poetical genius. His poetry is a scathing criticism of the life of his age. In his *Luzūmiyāt* he has mercilessly exposed the flaws and evils of his society. Another important work is *Risālat al-Ghufrān*. He died in 1059 A.D.

87. It is said that when al-Ṭabarī, the great historian, died he was buried in his house secretly at night, because people obstructed his burial in day time due to the opposition of the Ḥanbalītes. For, he wrote a book on differences among schools of jurisprudence and did not mention the opinions of Imām Ḥanbal, (Aḥmad Amīn, *Zuhr al-Islām*, Vol. II, p. 4.)

88. Yaʿqūb b. Ishāq al-Kindī is the father of Muslim philosophy. He was an ʿArab. His father was the governor of Kūfā, and he studied at Baghdad. His real training and equipment lay in a knowledge of Greek, which he used in preparing translations of Greek works. He also wrote commentaries and original treatises, of which the essay *On the Intellect* and another *On the Five Essences* are the most noteworthy. His metaphysics is neo-Platonic which he strove to reconcile with Islamic ideas.

89. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Tarkhān Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī was born at Fārāb. He later went to Baghdad and finally settled at Damascus under the patronage of Saif al-Dawlah. He set to work on Aristotelian philosophy and wrote commentaries and original books on various subjects. His primary importance was as a teacher of logic. He strove to reconcile Aristotelianism with Platonism, and gave new philosophical

interpretations to many of the Islamic beliefs and ideas. He is rightly called the 'Second Teacher', Aristotle being the First.

90. For Ikhwān al-Safā' see pages 40-43 of this book.

91. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtā' wa'l-Mu'ānasah*, Vol. II, p.14.

92. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 18.

93. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 6.

94. *Ibid*, Vol. II, pp. 5-6.

95. *Ibid*, the preface

96. Yahyā b. 'Adī b. Ḥumaid b. Zakariya was a great logician of his age. He was born at Takrīt, went to Baghdad and studied under al-Fārābī. He translated the Laws of Plato from its Syrian version into Arabic, and wrote a book named *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*. He earned his living by copying books and died in 975 A.D.

97. Abū 'Alī al-Ḥusain b. 'Abdullāh b. Sīnā, the philosopher and physician, came from a family of Bukhārā. He learned Greek philosophy, geometry and arithmetic from Isma'īlian missionaries. He next studied medicine, and on account of his medical skill received the favour of Nūḥ b. Maṣṣūr, the governor of Khurānsān, in whose library he made an intensive study of Greek philosophy. Ibn Sīnā wrote many books. His *Al-Shifā'* is an encyclopaedia of logic, physics, metaphysics and mathematics in eighteen volumes. He later compressed it in one volume under the title *Al-Najāt* which is more popular. His famous medical Canon is more methodical than the *Al-Ḥawī* of Rāzī. Ibn Sīnā constructed a splendid philosophical system that marks the culmination of philosophy in the east. Al-Ghazālī considered him the best interpreter of Greek thought.

98. Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Muhallabī belonged to Baṣra and was born in 903 A.D. Beside an able wazir, al-Muhallabī was a generous man and an eminent writer. He was distinguished as a great patron of art and literature. The foremost among his companions with whom he discussed a variety of problems were Miskawaih, Abul Faraj al-Isphahānī, Ibn Quraiyah, Ibn Ma'rūf and Qādī Tanūkhī. He died in 963 A.D. Ibn Ḥajjāj wrote an elegy on his death from which we may quote a few couplets :

يا معشر الشعراء دعوة موجه لا يرتجى فرج السلو لديه
عزوا القوافي بالوزير فانها تبكى دما بعد الدموع عليه
مات الذي أسمى الشاء وراءه و جميل عفو الله بين يديه
هدم الزمان بموته الحصن الذي كنا نفر من الزمان اليه

(See Maḥmūd Ghannāwī, *Al-Adab fī Zill-e-Banī Buwayh*, pp. 132-134.)

99. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusain Abul Faḍl Ibn al-ʿAmīd was the wazīr of Rukn al-Dawlah in Rayy. He was an able administrator and a good general. ʿAḍud al-Dawlah learned from him the art of administration. He was a great patron of art and literature. A host of scientists, literary men and poets enjoyed his favour. He was himself a great literary genius. Al-Thaʿalibī says that writing began with ʿAbdul Ḥamīd and ended with Ibn al-ʿAmīd. His letters have been collected in a big volume. After 24 years of wazirate he died in 971 A.D.

100. Abul Qāsim, Ismāʿīl b. ʿAbbād, Kafī al-Kufāt, commonly known as the ʿṢāhib' was born in 938 A.D. In the early part of his career he was attached as ordinary scribe to the wazīr Ibn al-ʿAmīd from whose companionship he probably had the name ʿṢāhib'. When Ibn al-ʿAmīd was killed Muʿizz al-Dawlah made him wazīr. He was famous for his style of letter writing and was one of the four master writers and elocutionists of his age (Ibn al-ʿAmīd, Ibn Nubātah and al-Ṣābī being the other three.) He is credited with a number of works among which *Al-Muḥḍḍ* (on philology, in seven volumes), *Kitāb al-Kāfī* (on letter-writing) deserve note. Notable among those who enjoyed his patronage were Abul Ḥasan al-Salāmī, Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī, al-Shaharzūrī, Al-Qāsim b. Abī al-ʿAlāʾ, Abul Ḥasan al-Jawharī, Abū Ḥāshim al-ʿAlawī. He died in 995 A.D. (See also Maḥmūd Ghannāwī, *Al-Adab fī Zill-e-Banī Buwayh*, p. 129-131.)

101. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusain Abul Faraj was born in Isphahān in the year 987. Later he went to Baghdad and devoted himself to literature, music and history. He enjoyed the patronage of al-Muhallabī and al-Ṣāhib. His best work is *Al-Aghānī* in ten volumes, which is a mine of information about the literary and cultural life of the pre-Islamic society as well as of the first three centuries of Islam. The book was written in fifty years and is considered to be one of the few great literary works in Arabic. Al-Ṣāhib b. ʿAbbād held it in great esteem. Abul Faraj Isphahānī died in 967 A.D.

102. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Hilāl al-Ṣābī was born at Ḥarrān in 925 A.D. He became the secretary of the wazīr al-Muhallabī under whose guidance he developed into an ideal 'dabīr.' Because of his marvellous style of letter-writing he was appointed by Muʿizz al-Dawlah as the chief secretary at his Dīwān al-Inshāʾ in 949. His *Kitāb al-Tāj*, that was the history of the Buwayhid Dynasty is lost. His '*Official Letters*' have been printed and form an important historical source. Al-Ṣābī

was the model of munshīs or dabīrs. He was a born poet, his poems were admired by al-Ṣāhib b. ‘Abbād above others.

103. Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ghaffār al-Fārsī was born in 901 at Fasa, a town in the province of Fārs. In 917 he went to Baghdad and delivered lectures on philology. His fame travelled far and wide. At the invitation of Saif al-Dawlah he went to Aleppo, where he was received with great respect. He soon grew tired of Aleppo and returned to Baghdad where ‘Aḍud al-Dawlah received him gladly. He would often say : “I am the slave of Abū ‘Alī in grammar.” He died in 987 A.D.

104. Abū Sa‘īd al-Ḥasan b. ‘Abd-Allah b. Marzubān al-Sīrāfī was born before 903 A.D. at Sīrāf on the Persian Gulf. He was the pupil of the famous Ibn Darrīd, Abū Bakr b. al-Mujāhid and Ibn al-Sarrāj in various branches of learning. The Sāmānid ruler Nūḥ b. Manṣūr considered him a great Imām in Law. His *Commentary on the ‘Book’ of Ṣībawaih* is most famous. Abū Sa‘īd died in 978 A.D.

105. Abul Faṭḥ ‘Uthmān b. Jinnī was born at Mousil before 940 A.D. He learned grammar from Abū ‘Alī al-Fārsī, and started giving instruction in grammar at Mousil. He occupied the chair of his teacher Abū ‘Alī after the latter’s death. Al-Mutanabbī once said : “Ibn Jinnī is a person whose value is not known to many.” His *Khaṣṣūṣ* has been printed at Cairo, while his treatise on the “*Principles of Inflection*” was translated into Latin by C. Hoberg. He died in 1002 A.D.

106. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Umar b. Sahl al-Ṣūfī (903-986 A.D.) was a native of Rayy. He joined the circle of ‘Aḍud al-Dawlah’s associates at Baghdad. He was the author of several important books. His book on *Fixed Stars* is, according to Sorton, one of the three master pieces of Muslim observational astronomy (*Introduction to the History of Science*, Washington, 1953, Vol. I, p. 666).

107. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-‘Alawī Abul Qāsim b. al-A‘lam was born at Baghdad. He associated himself with ‘Aḍud al-Dawlah. He was the author of some astronomical tables which were used for about three hundred years down to the days of al-Qifṭī (d. 1248). He died in 986 A.D.

108. ‘Alī b. Aḥmad Abul Qāsim al-Antākī was a mathematician of the court of ‘Aḍud al-Dawlah. He wrote a commentary on *Euclid* and various books on arithmetic. He died in 987 A.D.

109. Bakhtīshū is renowned for his famous treatise on medicine the *Kāfī*, a copy of which he presented to the Dār al-‘Ilm at Baghdad. He died in 941 A.D.

110. Dr. Maḥṣūn Kabīr, *The Buwayhid Dynasty of Baghdad, Indo Iranica*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, p. 34.

111. See note 102.

112. Muḥammad b. ‘Abdullāh Abul Ḥasan al-Salāmī was born at Baghdād in 948 A.D. He went to Isphahān and associated himself with Ṣāḥib b. ‘Abbād. Later he became the *nadīm* of ‘Aḍud al-Dawlah. Al-Salāmī was considered to be the greatest poet produced by Irāq. He started composing poetry at the age of ten and soon gained recognition in higher poetical circles of Mousil. Al-Ṣāḥib b. ‘Abbād had a high opinion about his poetry. He was a favourite of ‘Aḍud al-Dawlah. He died in 1003 A.D.

113. Ibn Nubātah Abū Naṣr ‘Abdul Azīz b. ‘Umar al-Sa’dī was born in 938 A.D. After a good deal of travelling he went to Ibn al-‘Amīd and eulogised him in the best of his compositions. He has been considered by some as one of the great poets of his time with this fault that he boasts too much. His poems were collected in a *Dīwān*. He was also the author of a collection of *Maqāmāt*. He died in 1015 A.D.

114. Dr. Maḥṣūn Kabīr, *The Buwayhid Dynasty of Baghdad, Indo Iranica*, Vol. XIII, pp. 33-34.

115. Abū Naṣr, Ṣābūr b. Ardshīr was the wazīr of Bahā’ al-Dawlah, and was equally remarkable for his abilities and learning. His palace was the constant resort of the poets of the day. The library which he founded at Baghdad is reported to have existed down till Tughril Beg’s entry into Baghdad when it was set on fire. Ṣābūr died in 102-5 A.D.

116. The spelling of the name as given in *Al-Qāmūs* (Vol. III, p. 319) is Miskawaih (مكويه)

117. Al-Khwānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Alī Rawḍātī, 1367 A.H., Isphahān, p. 70.

118. Al-Baihaqī, *Tatimmat Ṣiwān al-Ḥikmah*, Lahore, 1351, A.H. p. 28 f.

119. Al-Shahrzūrī, *Nuḥḥat al-Arwāḥ*, cit. Dr. A. Azīz ‘Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, Egypt, 1946, p. 82.

120. Chalpī, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, Leipzig, Vol. II, p. 476-77.

121. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawhidī, *Al-Imtā’ wa’l-Mu’ānasah*, Vol. I, p. 32, 35, 36 etc.

122. Al-Tha‘ālibī, *Tatimmat al-Yatīmah*, Vol. I, p. 96.

123. Al-Khwārizmī, *Rasā’il*, Constantinople, 1227 A.H., p. 173.

124. Abū Sulaimān al-Manṭiqī, *Ṣiwān al-Ḥikmah*, p. 116, cit. by Dr. A.A. ‘Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, pp. 81-82.

125. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, Egypt, Vol. V, p. 5.
126. Al-Qifṭī, *Tūrīkh al-Ḥukamā'*, Leipzig, 1903, pp. 331-32.
127. Ibn Abī Uṣaibī'ah, *Tabaqāt al-Aṭibbā'*, Vol. I, p. 245.
128. Al-ʿĀmilī, *A'yān al-Shī'ah*, Vol. X, p. 139, cit. by Dr. A. A. 'Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, p. 82.
129. *Ibid*, Vol. X, p. 202, cit. by Dr. A.A. 'Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, p. 82.
130. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, Vol. V, p. 10.
131. For instance he writes :
- و من سمع كلام الامام صلوات الله عليه الذي صدره من حقيقة الشجاعة
اذ قال لاصحابه « ايها الناس ان لم تقتلوا تموتوا والذي نفس ابن ابي طالب
بيده لالف ضربة بالسيف على الراس اهون من مية على الفراش » .
(*Tahdhīb*, p. 89). Again in the discussion of humour (*Tahdhīb*, p. 164.)
he refers to 'Alī just after the Prophet :
- و كان اميرالمومنين كثير المزاح حتى عابه بعض الناس فقال لولادعابه فيه .
132. Al-ʿĀmilī, *A'yān al-Shī'ah*, Vol. X, p. 144, cit. Dr. A. A. 'Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, p. 83.
133. Al-Khwārizmī, *Rasā'il*, p. 373.
134. Al-Maqdisī, *Aḥsan al-Taqāsim*, Leiden, 1906, pp. 390-391.
135. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtā' wa'l-Mu'ānasah*, Vol. I, p. 35.
136. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 38.
137. *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, p. 42.
138. Dr. 'Abdul 'Azīz 'Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, p. 107.
139. Al-Khwānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, p. 70.
- فصار من كبارندماء و رسله الى نظراء
140. Al-ʿĀmilī, *A'yān al-Shī'ah*, Vol. X, p. 141,
- و كان مسكويه خازنا له اثرا عنده كما تما لاسراره
cit. by Dr. A. A. 'Izzat in *Ibn Miskawaih*, p. 109.
141. Margoliouth, D. S., Preface to *The Eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate*, 1921, p. iii.
142. *Ibid*, p. iii.
143. Al-ʿĀmilī, *A'yān al-Shī'ah*, Vol. X, p. 141, cit. by Dr. 'Abdul 'Azīz 'Izzat in *Ibn Miskawaih*, p. 111.
144. Ibn Abī Uṣaibī'ah, *Tabaqāt al-Aṭibbā'*, Vol. I, p. 245.
145. Al-Baihaqī, *Tatimmat Ṣiwān al-Ḥikmah*, Lahore, 1351 A.H., pp. 28-29.

146. *Ibid*, p. 29, 32-33. Abul Faraj b. al-Ṭaiyib Jāthliq was a physician and a philosopher of Baghdad. He knew Greek and Latin and wrote books on logic and medicine. Ibn Sīnā had criticised many of his views.

Abul Qāsim al-Kirmānī had discussions with Ibn Sīnā. The latter has collected his answers to his queries in his *Risālat al-Uḍḥawīyah* (al-Baihaqī, *Tatimmat Ṣiṭwān al-Ḥikmat*, pp. 27-32, 32-33).

147. This 'Amīd al-Malik was probably, as Margoliouth suggests (Preface to the *Eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate*, p. IV), Abū Ṭāhīr Muḥammad b. Ayūb, the wazīr of al-Qādir and al-Qā'im, who was known as 'Amīd al-Rauṣā'.

148. Al-Tha'ālībī, *Tatimmat al-Ya'īmāh*, Vol. I, pp. 97-99.

149. Miskawaih, *Tahdhīb*, p. 42.

150. This vow has been quoted on pages 120-123 of this book.

151. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtā' wa'l-Mu'ānasah*, Vol. I, p. 36, 136.

152. Dr. A. A. 'Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, p. 119-120.

153. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtā' wa'l-Mu'ānasah*, Vol. I, p. 35.

154. Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-'Āmirī was a native of Khurānsān. He went to Rayy and associated himself with Ibn al-'Amīd. During his stay at Rayy he delivered lectures on philosophy and logic. After five years he went to Baghdad and from there returned to his native place where he died in 991 A.D. Besides commentaries on Aristotle's works he wrote two books on ethics, *Kitāb Al-Sa'ādāt wa'l-Is'ād* and *Al-Nusk al-'Aqālī*.

155. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtā' wa'l-Mu'ānasah*, Vol. I, p. 36.

156. Dr. M. Iqbāl, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, Bazm-e-Iqbāl, Lahore, p. 23.

157. Dr. A. A. 'Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, pp. 134-135.

158. For detailed account of *Al-Ḥikmat al-Khālīdah* see 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badwī's introduction to its edition, Maktabah al-Nahḍat al-Miṣriyah, 9 Shārē' Adlī Bāshā, Qairo, 1952.

Ḥasan b. Sahl succeeded to wazirate of al-Māmūn after the death of his brother al-Faḍl b. Sahl. But he could not bear the loss of his brother who had been mercilessly murdered and left the wazirate in 818 A.D. He died in 850 A.D. He was a distinguished writer and had a number of translations from Persian to Arabic to his credit.

159. Preface to *The Eclipse of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate*, p. VI.

160. Von Grunebaum, G. E., *Medieval Islam*, Chicago, 1953, p. 283.

F. Rosenthal writes in his *History of Muslim Historiography*

(Leiden, 1952, p. 123) "Miskawaih displayed a keen grasp of what was historically essential, and the important events are intelligently and coherently presented."

161. Preface to *The Eclipse of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate*, p. VII.

162. Von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam*, p. 284.

163. Preface to *The Eclipse of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate*, p. VII and Von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam*, pp. 285-86.

164. Preface to *The Eclipse of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate*, p. VI.

165. Dr. G. Richter, *Medieval Arab Historiography* tr. and ed. M. Ṣābir Khān, Islamic Culture, Vol. XXIV, No. 2, April 1960, p. 147.

166. Margoliouth, *The Eclipse of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate*, Preface, p. IV.

167. Dr. A. A. 'Izzat, *Ibn Miskawaih*, pp. 125-142.

CHAPTER II

1. *Qur'ān*, II, 20; VII, 156.

2. The *Qur'ān* explicitly says that the members of a family, fathers (or ancestors), wives and descendants will live together in Paradise, provided they are virtuous. (XIII, 23; XL, 8; LII, 21). It also says that friends and comrades will enjoy a common happy life, bless each other, and will have no rancour in their breast against any one (XV, 45-47). Their society will be free from all social evils, and will be imbued with mutual love (LXXVIII, 35; LVI, 25-26; X, 10). Life in Paradise will be the ideal life, and as such it must provide for the urge for social communion a fair play.

3. To quote but one tradition. A man asked the Prophet, "Who are the best men?" The Prophet replied: "Those who strive for the cause of Allāh with their lives and wealth (are the best)." The man again asked, "Who are the next best?" The Prophet replied: "Those who reside alone on any mountain and worship their Lord (and in another tradition, fear God, and do not cause any harm to others)." This tradition has been reported by Bukhārī and Muslim through Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (see *Riyāḍ al-Ṣūlehīn*, Al-Nawawī, ch. *Istihbāb al-'Uzlah 'ind Fāsūd al-Nās wa'l-Zamān*).

4. Although this tradition has not been reported authentically, the idea which it conveys is nevertheless correct.

5. *Qur'an*, LXII, 27; *Dārmī*, ch *Nikāh*; *Musnad Ḥanbal*, III, 83, 266 and VI, 226.

6. A number of stances have been quoted by al-Nawawī, *Riyāḍ al-Ṣālehīn*, ch. *Al-Iqtisād fī al-Ṭibāḥ*.

7. Abū Bakr and 'Umar were distinguished for their right judgments in social and political affairs, the Prophet would first turn to them for consultation. Abū Hurayrah was the most outstanding figure among the Men of the Bench (*Aṣḥāb-e-Ṣuffa*) who were ascetics; so was Abū Dhar throughout his life. 'Alī and Khālīd were the foremost generals of Islam. 'Uthmān and 'Abd al-Raḥmān were the richest men. Ibn Mas'ūd and Ibn 'Abbās were devoted to learning, and possessed a keen insight into the Qur'ān and *fiqh*, and so was 'Āishah, the wife of the Prophet.

8. Reported by Razīn, quoted in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*, ch. *Manāqib-e-Ṣāḥbah*.

9. *تَنْقِذُ بَاعِلَاقِ اللَّهِ* This tradition is often quoted in ṣūfī books. However, I have not been able to trace its source.

10. The end for man as laid down in the Qur'ān is to be an 'Abd (LI, 56.) 'Abadīyat encompasses all the activities of life. Its essence lies in willing obedience to the will (the commands and wishes) of God. The Prophet is reported to have said that his highest desire was to be an 'abd of the Lord. A very illuminating discussion of the conception of 'abadīyat is found in Ibn Qaiyim's *Madārij al-Sālekīn* (ed. Muḥiyuddīn 'Abdul Ḥamīd, Qairo, 1375 A.H., Vol. I, pp. 74-122). See also Ibn Taimīya's *Risālat al-'Ubūdīyah*, Egypt, 1323 A.H.

11. Sidgwick, Henry, *Outline of the History of Ethics*, Macmillan and Co., London, 1954, p. 111.

12. *Qur'ān*, XVI, p. 90.

13. *Qur'ān*, XVII, p. 29.

14. The eating of pork or any other strictly prohibited (*ḥarām*) thing has been permitted in extraordinary situations by the Qur'ān (VI, 146; V, 3; II, 173). The drinking of wine is also permissible in similar situations. To speak a lie in order to save an innocent life from the hands of an unjust murderer has been permitted by al-Ghazālī (*Iḥyā'*, Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabīyat al-Kubrā, Egypt, Vol. III, pp. 119-124). See also al-Nawawī, *Riyāḍ al-Ṣālehīn*, ch. *What lies are permissible*. They base their view on the tradition: He cannot be an imposture who makes peace among men and speaks truth or makes a false but not malicious report (*Bukhārī* and *Muslim*). Speaking ill of a person has also been permitted when the purpose of doing it is to reform the man concerned, or save others from his wrong deeds, (See al-Nawawī, *Riyāḍ al-Ṣālehīn*, ch. *What kinds of backbiting are permissible*).

15. The first tradition of the Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī.

16. The following verses of the Qur'ān seem to support the Ash'arite view of obligation-

'His varily is all creation and commandments' (VII, 54). 'Slay not the life which Allāh had made sacred, save in the course of justice. This He had commanded you, in order that ye may discern' (VII, 152). 'If ye obey them, ye will be in truth idolators' (VI, 117). That the authority to prohibit any thing or legalise any thing belongs to God (See VI, 143-146).

17. Verses as the following seem to support the Ash'arite view of knowledge of the good and right.

'Allāh chargeth you concerning (the provision for) your children : to the male the equivalent of the portion of two females... .. Ye know not which of them is nearer unto you in usefulness. It is an injunction from Allāh. Lo ! Allāh is Knower, Wise' (IV, 10).

18. Qur'ān, XCI, 7-8.

19. Reported by Aḥmad, Tirmidhī, Baihaqī and Razīn, as quoted in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*, ch. *Al-I'isām Bi'l-Kitāb u a'-l-Sunqah*.

20. Qur'ān, LXXIV, 38.

21. Qur'ān, XL, 17.

22. Qur'ān, VI, 149; XVI, 35.

23. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics*, London, 1953, pp. 98-100.

24. The problem of knowledge of moral principles or of their obligation has not been discussed by al-Ash'arī in *Al-Ibānah*. In the *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn*, too, the reference to this problem is very inadequate.

25. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Mahrān, Abū Ishāq was born at Ispharāyīn (a place between Nīsāpūr and Jurjān). He was a great theologian and jurist, and was known as Rukn al-Dīn (pillar of religion). He taught at Nīsāpūr and lectured also in Khurāsān and 'Irāq. Among his books are *Al-Jāme'* in ten volumes on theology, and a book on the principles of jurisprudence. He had many discussions with the Mu'tazilites. He died in 1027 A.D. at Nīsāpūr and was buried at Ispharāyīn.

26. Mr. 'Abd al-Subḥān in his article "*The Nature of Summum Bonum in Islam*" (Islamic Culture, Hyderabad, Oct. 1947) observes that "all the Muslim scholastic philosophers, both the Mu'tazilites and the orthodox alike, have held that the Beatific Vision is the *summum bonum* of life under the Islamic dispensation." But throughout his article he has only discussed the problem of its nature and possibility, a problem that the theologians have been discussing from the very beginning. I

seriously doubt whether the early theologians ever discussed it as the *summum bonum* of man.

27. *The Letter of Porphyry to Marcella*, ed. with an introduction by Alice Zimmern, London, 1896, p. 27, 35.

28. *Ibid*, pp. 40-41; Thomas Whittaker, *The Neo-Platonists*, Cambridge, 1928, pp. 91-94.

Political virtues tend to moderate passions, the cathartic only to withdraw the soul from earthly things, the intellectual virtues then enable man to turn towards the First Cause, but the contemplative virtues lead him straight to God. "He who energises according to the practical virtues is a worthy man; but he who energises according to the cathartic (purifying) virtues is an angelic man, or is also a good demon. He also energises according to the intellectual virtues alone is a god, but he who energises according to the paradigmatic virtues is the father of gods". (*Auxiliaries*, II, Cited in the Introduction to *The Letter of Porphyry to Marcella*, p. 41).

29. Al-Shahristānī, *Kitāb al-Milal wa'l-Nihāl*, ed. Muḥammad b. Faṭḥ-Allāh, Azhar, Egypt, 1947, p. 62; Zuhdī Ḥasan Jārullāh, *al-Mu'tazilah*, Qairo, 1947, p. 92, 97, 99.

30. Shahristānī, *Kitāb al-Milal wa'l-Nihāl*, p. 62.

واتفقوا على ان العبد قادر خالق لافعاله خيرهاو شرها مستحق على مايفعله ثوابا و عقابا
في الدار الآخرة و الرب تعالى منزوع عن ان يضاف اليه شر و ظلم و فعل هو كافر
ومعصية لانه لو خلق الظالم كان ظالما كما لو خلق العدل كان عادلا

31. *Ibid*, p. 133, 136; Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn*, Istanbul, 1929, Vol. I, p. 279.

32. Al-Shahristānī, *Al-Milal wa'l-Nihāl*, p. 156; and *Nihāyat al-Iqdām*, ed. Guilloume, Oxford, 67-78; al-Ghazālī, *Al-Iqtesād fī al-Itiqād*, Matba'at al-Sa'ādah, Egypt, 1327 A.H., pp. 37-40; Z.H. Jār-Allāh, *al-Mu'tazilah*, pp. 261-262.

33. Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn*, Vol. I, p. 253-254.

34. واتفقوا على ان الله تعالى لا يفعل الاصلاح والخير ويجب عليه من حيث الحكمة
رعاية مصالح العباد والاصلاح والالطف

(Al-Shahristānī, *Al-Milal*, p. 73, 58, 63, 167).

35. Al-Bāqillānī, *Al-Tamhīd*, ed. Muḥd. Al-Khudrī and Muḥd. 'Abdul Hādī Abū Rīdah, Qairo, 1947, p. 107.

36. Al-Ghazālī, *al-Mustasfā*, Al-Matba'at al-Amīriyah, Būlāq, Egypt, 1322 A.H. Vol. I, p. 56.

37. *Ibid*, p. 57; al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, Vol. II, p. 356; Shahrīstānī, *Nihāyat al-Iqdām*, p. 371.

38. Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Mustaṣfā*, p. 56.

39. Al-Shahrīstānī, *Al-Milal wa'l-Nihāl*, p. 74, 81, 104, 106, 120.

40. Al-Bāqillānī, *al-Tamhīd*, pp. 107-113.

41. Al-Ghazālī, *al-Mustaṣfā*, pp. 56-61.

42. Al-Bāqillānī, *Al-Tamhīd*, p. 114; Al-Shahrīstānī, *al-Milal wa'l-Nihāl*, p. 168.

43. Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Niẓāmuddīn Anṣārī, *Fawāteḥ al-Raḥmūt* on the margin of *al-Mustaṣfā*, al-Ghazālī, pp.25-26; Al-Ḥasan b. Abul Ḥasan Abū 'Adhbah, *al-Rawḍat al-Baḥīyah*, Hyderabad, pp. 34-39.

44. *Rasū'il al-Kindī al-Falsafīyah*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abdul Ḥādī Abū Rīdah, Matba'at al-Itimād, Egypt, 1950, Vol. I, p. 273.

45. *Ibid*, p. 273.

46. *Ibid*, p. 274.

47. *Ibid*, p. 276, 278.

48. *Ibid*, pp. 274, 276.

49. *Ibid*, p. 275, 276.

50. *Ibid*, p. 277.

51. *Ibid*, p. 21.

52. *Ibid*, Introduction, pp. 22-23.

53. De Boer, *History of Philosophy in Islam*, Eng. tr. E.R. Jones, London, 1903, pp. 118-119.

54. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Siyāsāt al-Madanīyah*, Hyderabad, p. 43.

55. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Arā'*, Matba'at al-Nail, Egypt, pp. 47-49.

56. *Ibid*, p. 50.

57. *Ibid*, p. 52.

58. Al-Fārābī, *Taḥṣīl al-Sa'ādah*, Hyderabad, p. 32; *al-Arā'*, Egypt, p. 67.

59. Al-Fārābī, *Risālah fī mā Yanbaghī an Yuqaddam qabl ta'allum al-Falsafah*, (included in *Al-Thamarrāt al-Mardīyah fī ba'd al-Risālāt al-Fārābīyah*), Leiden, 1890, p. 53.

60. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Arā'*, pp. 1-17.

61. *Ibid*, p. 67.

62. *Ibid*, p. 66.

63. Al-Fārābī, *Risālah fī mā Yanbaghī an Yuqaddam*, p. 53; Rosenthal, E.I.J., *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, Cambridge, 1958, p. 123.

64. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Tanbīh 'alā Sabīl al-Sa'ādah*, Hyderabad, p. 10.

65. *Ibid*, pp. 10-11.

66. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Tanbīh*, pp. 11-12.

67. Al-Fārābī, *Risālah fī mā yanbaghū an Yuqaddam*, p. 52, 53; *Fuṣūl al-Madanī*, Eng. tr. Dunlop, D.M., Cambridge, 1961, p. 74.
68. Al-Fārābī, *Tahṣīl*, p. 5, 11, 14.
69. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Arāʾ*, p. 78.
70. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Siyāsah al-Madanīyah*, pp. 47-48.
71. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Siyāsah al-Madanīyah*, pp. 48-49.
72. Rosenthal, E.I.J., *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, p. 131.
73. De Boer, *History of Philosophy in Islam*, Eng. trans. p. 123.
74. Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī, *Al-Imtāʾ waʾl-Muʾanasah*, Vol. II, p. 5.
75. Aḥmad Amīn, *Zuḥr al-Islām*, Vol. II, p. 151.
76. *Rasāʾil-e-Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, Bombay, 1905 A.H., Vol. I, pp. 39-40.
77. ʿUmar Farrūkh, *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, Bairut, 1953, p. 134.
78. *Rasāʾil*, Bombay, Vol. I, pp. 48-49.
79. *Ibid*, Vol. II, 12th Risālah and Vol. II, 3rd Risālah.
80. ʿUmar Farrūkh, *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, p. 137.
81. *Ibid*, p. 139.
82. *Rasāʾil*, Bombay, Vol. II, p. 342.
83. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 333.
84. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 336.
85. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 336.
86. ʿUmar Farrūkh, *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, p. 37.
87. *Rasāʾil*, Bombay, Vol. II, p. 315.
88. ʿUmar Farrūkh *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, p. 20.
89. *Ibid*, p. 20.
90. *Ibid*, p. 27.
91. Aḥmad Amīn, *Zuḥr al-Islām*, Vol. II, p. 155.
92. *Rasāʾil*, Bombay, Vol. II, pp. 339-340.
93. *Ibid*, Vol. III, 7th Risālah and Vol. II, 16th Risālah.
94. Kāmīl al-Bāzji and Anṭūn Ghatās Karam, *Aʾlām al-Falsafah al-ʿArabīyah*, p. 483.

95. The first ṣūfīs were ascetics. They were disgusted with the growing moral and religious degeneration, and reacted strongly against the pleasure-seeking spirit of the age. They terribly feared God's vengeance and punishment, withdrew themselves from political life and devoted themselves whole-heartedly to the purification of their souls. They organised no movement, nor did they care to propagate their ideas. This was the first stage in the development of ṣūfism. The third century produced great founders of ṣūfism. They revolted against rationalism and against the theological efforts to understand religion, which in their view lead to a lifeless conception of religion, and taught

the way of love and devotion. The typical doctrines of mysticism, e.g., the doctrine of unity, of love, of stations and states, etc. originated at this stage. They were, however, not fully expounded and elaborated in this century. This is the second stage of the development of ṣūfism. (See Arberry, *Ṣūfism*; Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*).

96. Al-Kalābādhī, *Kitāb al-Ta'arruf le Madhāhib ahl al-Taṣawwuf*, Eng. tr. Arberry, A. J. Cambridge, 1935, p. 35.

97. *Ibid*, pp. 35-36.

98. *Ibid*, p. 36. Abū Bakr b. 'Abī Ishāq Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Ya'qūb was a native of Kalābādh in Bukhārā. His *Ta'arruf* was held in esteem by great ṣūfis. Suhwardī Maqtūl (d. 1191 A.D.) is reported to have said. "But for the *Ta'arruf* we should not have known of ṣūfism." Commentaries on the *Ta'arruf* were written by a number of great ṣūfis like 'Abd-Ullāh b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī al-Harwī (d. 1088), 'Alā al-Dīn 'Alī b. Ismā'il al-Qanāwī (d. 1329) and Ismā'il b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Mustamlī (Introduction to the *Ta'arruf*).

99. Al-Kalābādhī, *Kitāb al-Ta'arruf*, Eng. tr. p. 36.

100. *Ibid*, p. 47.

101. Al-Ghazālī, *Mīzān al-'Amal*, al-Matba'at al-Miṣrīyah, 1342 A.H., p. 15-

ان سعادة كل شئ و لذته و راحته في وصوله الى الكمال الخاص به
و ايضا لا معنى للسعادة الا نيل النفس كمالها الممكن لها

102. Al-Ghazālī, *Mīzān al-'Amal*, p. 15, 33.

فقد عرفت ان سعادة النفس و كمالها ان تتقش بحقائق الامور
الالهية وتتحد بها حتى كأنها هي

103. *Ibid*, p. 34, 30-32.

اعلم ان جانب العمل متفق عليه و انه مقصود لمحو الصفات الردية و تطهير
النفس من الاخلاق السئية و لكن جانب العلم مختلف فيه

104. *Ibid*, p. 34.

105. *Ibid*, p. 34.

بل قالوا الطريق تقديم المجاهدة لمحو الصفات المذمومة و قطع العلائق كلها والاقبال
بكل الهمة على الله تعالى ومهما حصل ذلك فاضت عليه الرحمة وانكشف
له سر الملكوت و ظهرت له الحقائق وليس عليه الاستعداد بالتصفية واحضار النية
مع الارادة الصادقة والتعطش التام و الزهد بالانتظار لما يفتح الله من الرحمة

106. Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl*, al-Matbaʿat al-Amīriyah, Qairo, 1303 A.H., p. 28.

وكان حاصل علمهم قطع عقبات النفس والتزهر عن اخلاصها المذمومة وصفاتها الحبيشة حتى يتوصل بها الى تخلية القلب من غير الله تعالى و تحليته بذكر الله

107. Sincerity, conviction, fear, love, trust in God and similar other qualities may be called virtues. Firstly, because they are permanent dispositions of the mind manifesting themselves in particular ways of action, and secondly, because they are acquired. To distinguish them from common moral virtues, they can be named as theological virtues, since their pivot is God. There is nothing in this designation that is incongruent with the notion of degree or progress that is implied in their being called stations by the ṣūfīs.

108. Abul Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Al-Junaid al-Khazzāz was a celebrated mystic of Baghdad. He belonged to a family hailing from Nahrwān and was the nephew of Sarī al-Saqāṭī. He studied law with Abū Thawr, the pupil of al-Shāfiʿī. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca alone on foot thirty times, and died at Baghdad in 910. He preferred sobriety to mystic intoxication of the soul. In theology, he maintained that the knowledge of God only came from demonstrative reason. He was known as *Saiyid al-Ṭāʾifah*, (Head of the Sect).

109. Al-Qushairī, *Risālah fī al-Taṣawwuf*, Egypt, 1959, p. 109.

110. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Ḥārith b. Asad al-Muḥāsibī was born at Baṣra. A legist of the Shāfiʿī School, a theologian who advocated the use of reason, using the dialectical vocabulary of the Muʿtazilites, which he was the first to turn against them, he finally adopted a life of ascetic renunciation after a moral conversion long meditated which he described in the beginning of his *Waṣāyah*. Among his books are *Sharḥ al-Maʿrifat* and the famous *Riʾāyah le-Ḥuqūq-Allāh*.

111. Abū Ṭālib, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Āṭīa al-Ḥārith al-Makkī, was a native of al-Jabal (between Baghdad and Wāsiṭ). He was educated at Mecca, and went to Baṣra where he was accused of Iʿtizāl. He then went to Baghdad and delivered sermons there. He was a *muḥaddith* and a mystic. His principal work is *Qūt al-Qulūb*, whole pages of which have been copied by al-Ghazālī in his *Iḥyāʾ*.

112. The contribution of *jehād* in the purification of the soul, in the development of the virtues of high rank, e.g., patience, trust in God and resignation, and in the eradication of love of wealth and worldly goods is obvious. There are a number of references to this function of *jehād*

in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. For instance: 'These are the vicissitudes which we cause to follow one another for mankind to the end that Allāh may know those who believe and may choose witness from you, and Allāh loveth not wrong-doers; and that Allāh may purify those who believe, and may blight the disbelievers' (III, 140-141). "And when the true believers saw the clans, they said : This is that which Allāh and His messenger promised us. Allāh and his messenger are true. It did but confirm them in their faith and resignation." (XXXIII, 22).

113. See *Qur'ān*, VIII, 46, 66 ; XIII, 24 ; XIV, 12 ; XVI, 42, 110, 126 ; XLVII, 31 ; XXX, 60 ; XXXI, 17 etc.

114. Trust in God in dangers, in trials and ordeals and in fearful situations have been indicated in various verses of the *Qur'ān*. For instance, VIII, 2, 49, 61-63 ; IX, 51 ; X, 83-86, 71 ; XI, 54-56, 88 ; XIV, 12 ; XVI, 42 ; XVIII, 13-16 ; XXII, 11, 15-16 etc.

115. 'Alī Hajwīrī, *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, Eng. tr. Nicholson, London, 1936, pp. 39-40.

116. Al-Kalābādhī, *Kitāb al-Ta'arruf*, Eng. tr. Arberry, p. 2.

117. 'Alī Hajwīrī, *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, Eng. tr. Nicholson, pp. 70-74.

CHAPTER III

1. De Lacy O'Leary, D.D., *Arabic Thought and Its Place in History*, London, 1939, p. 114.

2. Miskawaih, *Al-Sa'ādah*, al-Matba'at al-'Arabīyah, Egypt, 1346 A.H., (1928 A.D.). pp. 55-58.

3. O'Leary, *Arabic Thought*, pp. 114-115.

4. *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 49.

5. Al-Khwānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī Rawḍātī, Isphahān, 1367, A.H., p. 70.

6. Miskawaih, *Al-Fauz al-Aṣghar*, Eng. tr. Sweetman J.W., pp. 90-91. This translation forms a part of Sweetman's *Islam and Christian Theology*, Vol. I, London, 1942. Onwards it will be referred to as *Al-Fauz*, Sw.

7. *Al-Fauz*, Sw., p. 106.

8. *Ibid*, p. 112.

9. *Ibid*, pp. 113, 147-148.

10. *Tahdhīb*, p. 141, 64, 116.

فَالله تبارك و تعالى هو الخير الاول فان جميع الاشياء تتحرك نحوه بالشوق اليه

11. *Al-Fauz*, Sw., p. 113.

12. *Ibid*, p. 108.
13. *Ibid*, p. 116.
14. *Ibid*, pp. 116-117.
15. *Ibid*, p. 32, 136.
16. Miskawaih, *Al-Hawāmīl wa'l-Shawāmīl*, ed. Aḥmad Amīn and Saiyid Aḥmad Ṣaqar, Qairo, 1951, p. 300.
17. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, pp. 113-114, 150.
18. *Ibid*, p. 123.
19. *Al-Fauz*, Urdū tr. Muḥammad Ḥasan, Aligarh, 1923, p. 109, 46; *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 125.
20. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 114.
21. *Ibid*, p. 138.
22. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 114.
23. *Ibid*, pp. 136-137.
24. *Ibid*, p. 138.
25. *Ibid*, pp. 137-138.
26. *Ibid*, pp. 137-138.
27. *Ibid*, p. 152.
28. *Ibid*, p. 150, 152, 148, 115.
29. *Ibid*, p. 139.
30. *Ibid*, p. 127.
31. *Ibid*, p. 134.
32. *Ibid*, pp. 150-51, 148.
33. *Ibid*, p. 153.
34. *Ibid*, p. 154, 138, 140.
35. Sidgwick, *Outline of the History of Ethics*, pp. 37-41.
36. *Ibid*, pp. 37-41, 105.
37. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 158.
38. *Ibid*, p. 159.
39. *Ibid*, p. 159.
40. Miskawaih, *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, p. 58.
41. *Ibid*, p. 55.
42. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 159.
43. *Ibid*, p. 160; *Tahdhīb*, p. 55.
44. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 161.
45. *Ibid*, p. 162; *Tahdhīb*, p. 58.
46. *Tahdhīb*, p. 58; *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 162.
47. *Tahdhīb*, p. 58; *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 162.
48. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 162; *Tahdhīb*, p. 58.
49. De Boer, *History of Philosophy in Islam*, p. 115.

50. *Tahdhīb*, p. 59.
51. *Ibid*, p. 59; *Al-Fauz Sw.*, pp. 167-170.
52. *Tahdhīb*, p. 58.
53. *Ibid*, p. 47.
54. *Ibid*, p. 3.
55. *Ibid*, pp. 3-8.
56. *Ibid*, pp. 3-8; Dr. M. Iqbal has summarised these arguments in his "*Development of Metaphysics in Persia*", *Bazm-e-Iqbal*, Lahore, pp. 31-32; *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, pp. 118-120, 130-138.
57. *Tahdhīb*, p. 175, 67; *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 119-120.
58. *Tahdhīb*, p. 175, 180.

جوهر النفس الذي هو ذات الانسان ولبه و خلاصته

59. *Tahdhīb*, p. 67.

In fact, for Stoics it was an axiom that all that is is corporeal. The soul and the body were equally corporeal, and their union was only a particular case of the union of matter and force. As essentially corporeal the human body and the soul were derived from the primitive fire, and were bound to return to it some day.

60. Sidgwick, H., *Outline of the History of Ethics*, p. 51.
61. *Ibid*, p. 106.
62. *Tahdhīb*, p. 146.
63. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 134.
64. *Ibid*, p. 137.
65. *Ibid*, pp. 137-138.
66. *Ibid*, p. 139.
67. *Ibid*, p. 139, 140.
68. *Ibid*, p. 139.
69. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 124.
70. *Ibid*, pp. 124-129.
71. *Ibid*, pp. 124-129.
72. *Ibid*, p. 168.
73. *Ibid*, pp. 168-169.
74. *Ibid*, p. 169.
75. *Ibid*, p. 170.
76. *Ibid*, p. 170.
77. *Ibid*, p. 170.
78. *Ibid*, p. 170,

79. *Ibid*, p. 170-171.

80. *Ibid*, p. 171.

81. *Ibid*, pp. 171-172.

82. Miskawaih, *al-Hawāmil wa'l-Shawāmil*, p. 43, 315-320 :

للإنسان بما هو إنسان أفعال و همم و سجایا و شیم قبل ورود الشرع وله بداية في رايه و اوائل في عقله لا يحتاج فيها الى شرع ، بل انما تاتي به الشريعة بتاكيد ماعنده والتنبية عليه فتشير على ما هو كامن فيه و موجود في فطرته قد اخذه الله تعالى عليه و سطره فيه من مبدأ الخلق فكل من له غريزة من العقل و نصيب من الانسانية ففيه حركة الى الفضائل و شوق الى المحاسن لالشي آخر اكثر من الفضائل و المحاسن التي يقتضيها العقل و توجيهها الانسانية وان اقترن بذلك في بعض الاوقات محبة الشكر و طلب السمعة و التماس اموراخر واولا ان محبة الشكر و ما يتبعه ايضا جميل وفضيلة لما رغب فيه و لولا ان الخالق تعالى واحد لم اتساوت هذه الحال بالناس ولا استجاب احد لمن دعا اليها و حض عليها اذا لم يجد في نفسه شاهدا لها و مصداقا بها

83. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, p. 134.

84. *Ibid*, p. 131.

85. *Ibid*, p. 131.

86. *Tahdhīb*, p. 12

87. *Al-Fauz, Sw.*, pp. 133-135.

88. *Ibid*, pp. 138-140.

CHAPTER IV

1. *Tahdhīb*, p. 33.

2. Naṣīruddīn Tūsī, *Akhlāq-e-Nāṣirī*, Lahore, p. 15.

علمست بانکه نفس انسانی چگونه خلقی اکتساب تواند کرد که جملگی افعال که باراده او صادر شود جميل و محمود بود پس موضوع این علم نفس انسانی بود ازین جهت که ازو افعال جميل و محمود یا قبیح و مذموم صادر تواند شد بحسب اراده

Jalāluddīn Dawwānī, *Akhlāq-e-Jalālī*, Lahore, 1923, p. 20.

3. Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, Longmans, Green and Co., 1885, Vol. I, p. 34.

4. *Ibid*, p. 34.

5. *Tahdhīb*, p. 76, 12, 32, 33.

6. *Ibid*, p. 76.

7. Ross, W.D., *Aristotle*, London, 1923, p. 190.

8. Al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī, *Al-Mufradāt fī Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān*, Egypt; al-Ālūsī, *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*, Vol. XII, p. 126, under the verse اما الذين سعدوا (XI, 105); Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 1956, Bk. I, pt. iv, pp. 1360-1362.

9. Ross, W.D., *Aristotle*, p. 190.

10. *Tahdhīb*, p. 63 :

والتي هي غاية الخيرات التي ترتقى الخيرات كلها اليها

Al-Sa'ādah, *Al-Matba'at al-'Arabīyah*, Egypt, 1928, p. 36 :

وهو الذى اليه ترتقى السعادات وعنده تقف جميعها فانها وجدت السعادات كلها من اجلها و بسببها وهى الغرض الاخير والكمال الاقصى

11. *Tahdhīb*, p. 74, 75 :

فيكون فعله بعينه هو غرضه اى ليس يفعل من اجل شى آخر سوى ذات الفعل

Al-Sa'ādah, p. 42 :

لا يجعل فى وقت من الاوقات طريقا الى غيره بل يراد لذاته لالغيره ابدا

12. *Tahdhīb*, p. 64, 65 :

هى تمام الخيرات وغايتها و التمام هو الذى اذا بلغنا اليه لم نحتاج معه الى شى آخر

13. Dr. 'Abdul 'Azīz 'Izzat, has endeavoured to show that Miskawaih's attitude to the Good and to the relation of human good with the Good is the same as that of Aristotle (*Ibn Miskawaih*, pp. 250-252). The text that he has quoted in support of his view proves only that the ultimate sa'ādah of man (*al-Sa'ādāt al-Quṣwā*) is related to various sa'ādāt of man, viz., virtue and goods of the body and fortune. I am quite unable to see what this assertion has to do with the relation of the highest sa'ādah of man with the Platonic Good. Moreover, Plato, too, affirmed that one cannot ascend to the Good unless he has purified his soul and adorned it with virtues.

14. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 62-63.

15. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. W. D. Ross, Oxford, 1925, 1096^a—1096^b.

16. See pages 105-106 of this book.

17. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 35-37.

18. *Ibid*, p. 70.

19. *Ibid*, p. 35-36.

20. *Ibid*, p. 38.

21. *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 40.

22. *Tahdhīb* p. 88, 65; *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 40.
23. *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 40; *Tahdhīb* p. 64.
24. *Tahdhīb*, p. 64.
25. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. W. D. Ross, 1095^b, 25.
26. *Ibid*, 1097^b, 25 and 1106^a, 15-25.
27. *Tahdhīb*, p. 9, 32.
28. *Ibid*, p. 63.
29. *Ibid*, p. 33.
30. *Ibid*, p. 33, *Al-Sa'ādah*, pp. 34-35.
31. *Al-Sa'ādah*, pp. 34-35.
32. *Tahdhīb*, p. 33-34.
33. *Ibid*, p. 33.
34. *Ibid*, p. 33.
35. *Ibid*, p. 33.
36. *Ibid*, p. 75; *Al-Fauz*, Sw., p. 156.
37. *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 36.
38. *Tahdhīb*, p. 75.
39. *Ibid*, p. 33.
40. *Ibid*, p. 33.
41. *Ibid*, pp. 63-65.
42. *Ibid*, pp. 79-80.
43. *Ibid*, pp. 65, 69, 140-141.
44. *Ibid*, pp. 65-65.
45. *Ibid*, pp. 66-67.
46. *Ibid*, p. 32, 146.
47. Sidgwick, H., *Outline of the History of Ethics*, pp. 57-58.
48. *Tahdhīb* pp. 143, 147-148.
49. *Ibid*, pp. 83-84, 79, 36, 53.
50. *Tahdhīb*, p. 66.
51. Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, Vol. I, p. 223.
52. *Tahdhīb*, p. 69.
53. *Ibid*, p. 34.
54. *Ibid*, 34; *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 61; *Al-Fauz*, Sw., p. 170.
55. *Al-Fauz*, Sw., p. 140, 170.
56. *Ibid*, p. 148; *Tahdhīb*, p. 77.
57. *Tahdhīb*, p. 143.
58. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 70-75.
59. *Ibid*, pp. 141, 33, 69-70.
60. *Ibid*, pp. 110-112, 97.
61. *Ibid*, p. 77.

62. *Tahdhīb*, p. 59; *Al-Fauz*, Sw., p. 180.
63. *Al-Sa'ādah*, pp. 37-38, 44.
64. *Ibid*, p. 37, 39.
65. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 23-24.

CHAPTER V

1. *Tahdhīb*, p. 25.
 2. *Ibid*, p. 25.
 3. *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 46; *Al-Hawāmil wa'l-Shawāmil*, p. 86.
 4. *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 46, 44.
 5. *Tahdhīb*, p. 25; *Al-Hawāmil wa'l-Shawāmil*, p. 86.
 6. Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, Vol. III, p. 46.
 7. Naṣīruddīn Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-e-Naṣirī*, Lahore, 1923, p. 60.
Jalāluddīn Dawwānī, *Akhlāq-e-Jalālī*, Lahore, 1923, p. 41.
 8. Dawwānī, *Akhlāq-e-Jalālī*, p. 41.
 9. *Al-Sa'ādah*, p. 44.
 10. *Al-Hawāmil wa'l-Shawāmil*, p. 119.
- ولسنا نسميها خلقا الا بعد ان تصير هيئة للنفس يصدر عنها فعل واحد بلا روية
فاما قبل ذلك فلا نسمى خلقا و لا يقال فلان بخيل ولا جواد الا اذا كان ذلك دأبه
11. *Tahdhīb*, p. 25, 27 ; In *Al-Hawāmil wa'l-Shawāmil*, p. 119 he writes :
 12. *Tahdhīb*, p. 26.
 13. *Ibid*, p. 26.
 14. *Ibid*, pp. 26-27.
 15. *Ibid*, p. 27.
 16. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 88-89.
 17. *Ibid*, p. 25.
 18. *Ibid*, p. 25.
 19. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 1.
 20. De Boer, *History of Philosophy in Islam*, pp. 129-30. See also his article on *Ethics*, Muslim in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*.
 21. Aḥmad Amīn, *Zuḥr al-Islām*, Vol. II, p. 178.
 22. *Tahdhīb*, p. 27. Reuben Levy's observation on Miskawaih's view of character is the same that has been expounded here. See the *Social Structure of Islam*, Cambridge, 1957, pp. 225-226.
 23. *Ibid*, p. 28.
 24. *Al-Hawāmil wa'l-Shawāmil*, p. 211-212.

25. Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, Vol. I, p. 40.
26. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 13-15.
27. *Ibid*, pp. 13, 15.
28. *Ibid*, pp. 13, 14.
29. *Ibid*, pp. 13, 15.
30. *Ibid*, p. 20.
31. *Ibid*, p. 20.
32. *Ibid*, pp. 20, 159-160.
33. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 20, 159-160.
34. Levy, H., *Sociology of Islam*, first ed. Vol. II, p. 117.

In the second edition of the book in 1957, this charge has been withdrawn.

35. *Tahdhīb*, p. 21.
36. *Ibid*, pp. 20-21.
37. *Ibid*, p. 21.
38. *Ibid*, p. 21.
39. *Ibid*, pp. 20-21.
40. *Ibid*, p. 108.
41. *Ibid*, pp. 87, 90, 13, 14, 72.
42. *Ibid*, p. 23.
43. *Ibid*, p. 16.
44. *Ibid*, p. 18.
45. *Ibid*, p. 22.
46. *Ibid*, p. 21.
47. *Ibid*, pp. 108-109.
48. I owe this idea to Grant Allen. See his *Aristotle*, Home University Library, Oxford, 1952, p. 173.
49. Miskawaih himself qualifies :

اما الجبن فهو الخوف مما لا ينبغي ان يخاف منه و اما التهور فهو الاقدام على ما
لا ينبغي ان يقدم عليه
(*Tahdhīb*, p. 22)

50. Sidgwick, H., *Outline of the History of Ethics*, p. 64.
51. Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, Vol. I, pp. 258-59.
52. *Tahdhīb*, p. 20.
53. Miskawaih defines wisdom, courage, temperance and justice on Platonic lines on pages 13-15 of the *Tahdhīb*. He describes the sub-virtues under these cardinal virtues on pages 15-19. He introduces the doctrine of the mean on page 20, and then goes on to show that the cardinal virtues are the means between the two extremes of vice. He treats them summarily on pages 21-23.

54. *Tahdhīb* p. 90; see also the conception of wisdom on pages 105-106 of this book.
55. *Tahdhīb*, p. 90.
56. Ross, W.D., *Aristotle*, p. 234.
57. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 19, 71, 115, 116, 129, 143.
58. *Ibid*, pp. 97, 105, 112, 117-118.
59. Sidgwick, *Outline of the History of Ethics*, p. 64
60. *Tahdhīb*, p. 106.
61. *Ibid*, pp. 106, 98.
62. *Ibid*, pp. 106, 98.
63. *Ibid*, p. 99.

CHAPTER VI

1. *Tahdhīb*, p. 12.
2. *Al-Hawāmīl wa'l-Shawāmīl*, pp. 236-237.
3. *Ibid*, p. 98.
4. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 13 and 15.
5. *Ibid*, p. 90.
6. *Ibid*, p. 90.
7. *Ibid*, p. 87.
8. *Ibid*, p. 90.
9. *Ibid*, pp. 87-88.
10. *Ibid*, p. 88.
11. *Magna Moralia*, Eng. tr, Ross, W. D., Oxford 1925, 1119¹⁰, pp. 25-30.
12. *Tahdhīb*, p. 22.
13. *Tahdhīb*, p. 90; *Al-Hawāmīl wa'l-Shawāmīl* p. 184.
14. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 89-90.
15. *Ibid*, p. 90.
16. *Ibid*, p. 17.
17. Naṣīruddīn Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-e-Nāṣirī*, pp. 69-70.
Jalāluddīn Dawwānī, *Akhlāq-e-Jalālī*, p. 64 f.
18. Al-Ghazālī, *Mīzan al-ʿAmal*, Al-Matbaʿat al-Miṣriyah, 1342 A.H. p. 66;
Prof. M. ʿUmaruddīn, *Ethical Philosophy of Imām al-Ghazzālī*, Aligarh, pp. 179-180.
19. *Tahdhīb*, p. 15, 161.
20. Sidgwick, H., *Outline of the History of Ethics* p. 60;
Ross, W.D., *Aristotle*, p. 106;

- Muirhead, T.H., *Chapters from Aristotle's Ethics*, London 1900, p. 104; Green, T.H., *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Oxford, 1906, pp. 305-307.
21. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. III, ch. VI.
 22. Plato, *Republic*, 460.
 23. *Tahdhīb*, p. 13.
 24. *Ibid*, p. 87.
 25. *Ibid*, p. 87.
 26. *Ibid*, p. 22.
 27. *Ibid*, p. 16.
 28. *Ibid*, pp. 17-18.
 29. Naṣīruddīn Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-e-Nāṣirī* p. 71.
 30. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 48-51.
 31. *Ibid*, p. 41.
 32. Explicit references to Galen are found in the *Tahdhīb* on p. 26, 27, 37 and 157 and in *al-Fauz*, Sw. on p. 134. Sweetman has also pointed out Galen's influences on Miskawaih's views, see pp. 152, 164
 33. The whole section on child training has been borrowed from Brisson's *Economics* (*Tahdhīb*, pp. 46-54.)
 34. See p. 235 of this paper.
 35. Muirhead, *Chapters from Aristotle's Ethics*, pp. 118-119.
Ross, W.D., *Aristotle*, p. 207.
 36. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 13, 14.
 37. Plato, *Phaedo*, p. 69 b.
 38. *Tahdhīb*, p. 19.
 39. *Ibid*, pp. 15-16.
 40. Jalāluddīn Dawwānī, *Akhlāq-e-Jalālī*, p. 63.
 41. *Ibid*, pp. 63-64; Ṭūsī, *Akhlāq-e-Nāṣirī*, p. 69.
 42. *Tahdhīb*, p. 21.
 43. *Ibid*, p. 16; Dawwānī also subscribes to this view, see p. 79.
 44. *Tahdhīb*, p. 15.
 45. *Al-Hawāmil wa'l-Shawūmil*, p. 84.
 46. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 97 and 104.
 47. *Ibid*, pp. 90, 93.
 48. *Ibid*, p. 93.
 49. Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Iḥyā*, Vol III, p. 47.
 50. Ibn Sīnā, *Risālah fī 'Ilm al-Akhlāq*, included in *Tis'a Rasā'il fī al-Ḥikmat wa'l-Ṭabī'iyāt*, Matba'ah Hindīyah, Maskī, Egypt, 1908, pp. 152-153;
Dawwānī has discussed this objection in his *Ethics*, see pp. 54-57.

51. *Tahdhīb*, p. 19.
52. *Ibid*, p. 19.
53. *Ibid*, p. 18.
54. *Ibid*, pp. 19-20.
55. *Ibid*, p. 15.
56. *Ibid*, p. 93.
57. *Ibid*, p. 99.
58. *Ibid*, p. 23.
59. *Ibid*, p. 99.
60. *Ibid*, p. 94.
61. *Ibid*, p. 95.
62. *Ibid*, p. 94.
63. *Tahdhīb*, p. 94.
64. *Ibid*, p. 94.
65. *Ibid*, p. 95.
66. *Ibid*, p. 96.
67. *Ibid*, p. 96.
68. *Ibid*, p. 96.
69. *Ibid*, pp. 96-97.
70. *Ibid*, p. 111.
71. *Ibid*, p. 104.
72. *Ibid*, p. 109.
73. *Ibid*, p. 116.
74. *Ibid*, p. 147.
75. *Ibid*, pp. 111-112.
76. *Ibid*, p. 113.
77. *Ibid*, pp. 120-121, 115-116.
78. *Ibid*, p. 141, 115.
79. *Ibid*, p. 141.
80. *Ibid*, pp. 121-122.
81. *Ibid*, p. 124.
82. *Ibid*, pp. 124-125.
83. *Ibid*, pp. 122-123.
84. *Ibid*, p. 114.
85. *Ibid*, p. 125, 121.
86. *Ibid*, p. 115.
87. *Ibid*, p. 115.
88. *Ibid*, p. 147.
89. *Tahdhīb*, p. 19.
90. *Ibid*, pp. 19, 135.

91. De Boer, *History of Philosophy in Islam*, p. 130.
92. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 100, 101-103.
93. *Ibid*, pp. 19-20.
94. *Ibid*, p. 73.
95. *Ibid*, pp. 143, 141.
96. *Ibid*, p. 103.
97. *Ibid*, p. 77.
98. *Ibid*, p. 123 f.
99. Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, Bk. *al-Imān*, Ch. *min al-Imān an Yuḥibba li Akhihe mā yuḥibbu le nafsi hī* ; Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ, Bk. *al-Imān*, *min Khisāl al-Imān an Yuḥibba li-Akhi-he mā Yuḥibbu min alKhair*.
100. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 117-118.
101. *Ibid*, p. 112.

CHAPTER VII

1. *Tahdhīb*, p. 1.
 2. *Ibid*, pp. 29-30.
- وللإنسان في ترتيب هذه الآداب و سياقها أولا فاولا الى الكمال الاخير طريق
متشبه فيها الطبيعة وهو ان ينظر الى هذه القوى التي تحدث فينا ايها اسبق
الينا وجودا فيبدأ بتقويمها ثم بما يليها على النظام الطبيعي ودوين ظاهر .
3. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 46-47, 29,
 4. *Ibid*, p. 29.
 5. *Ibid*, pp. 29, 48.
 6. *Ibid*, p. 48.
 7. *Ibid*, pp. 42, 49.
 8. *Ibid*, p. 48.
 9. *Ibid*, pp. 49-50, 51.
 10. *Ibid*, p. 6.
 11. *Ibid*, pp. 51-54.
 12. *Al-Fauz*, Sw., pp. 145, 98 ; *Al-Sa'adah*, p. 60.
 13. *Al-Fauz*, Sw., pp. 145 ; *Al-Sa'adah*, p. 60.
 14. *Al-Fauz*, Sw., pp. 145, 98 ; *Al-Sa'adah*, pp. 50-58.
 15. *Al-Sa'adah*, p. 61.
 16. *Tahdhīb*, p. 33.
 17. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, Vol. V. pp. 16-19.
 18. *Tahdhīb*, p. 53.
 19. *Ibid*, p. 161.

20. *Ibid*, p. 50.
21. *Ibid*, p. 154.
22. *Ibid*, p. 147.
23. *Ibid*, pp. 151-52.
24. *Al-Fauz*, Sw., p. 141.
25. *Tahdhīb*, p. 150.
26. *Ibid*, p. 150.
27. *Ibid*, p. 150.
28. *Ibid*, p. 151.

Miskawaih has not expressed the name of the king. Naṣīruddīn Ṭūsī suggests that the reference is to 'Aḍud al-Dawlah.

29. *Tahdhīb*, p. 149.
30. *Ibid*, p. 156.
31. *Ibid*, p. 148.
32. *Ibid*, p. 149.
33. *Ibid*, p. 155.
34. *Ibid*, p. 155.
35. *Ibid*, p. 147.
36. *Ibid*, p. 156.
37. *Ibid*, p. 157.
38. *Ibid*, pp. 157-158.
39. *Ibid*, p. 158.
40. *Ibid*, p. 158.
41. *Ibid*, p. 158.
42. *Ibid*, p. 158.
43. Dawwānī, *Akhlaq-e-Jalālī*, p. 146.
44. Sa'dī, *Gulistān*, Mujtabā'ī Press, Delhi, 1325 A.H. p. 55.
45. For instance he quotes in the *Tahdhīb* from Socrates (pp. 131, 133, 179, 185), Hippocrates (p. 162), Galen (pp. 157, 37), Ḥasan Baṣarī (p. 149), and from *Kalīlah wa Dimnah* (p. 139) etc.
46. *Tahdhīb*, p. 145 ff.
47. *Ibid*, p. 145.
48. *Ibid*, p. 145.
49. *Ibid*, p. 146.
50. Ṭūsī, *Akhlaq-e-Naṣirī*, pp. 118-119.
51. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 161-162.
52. *Ibid*, p. 174.
53. *Ibid*, p. 178.
54. *Ibid*, p. 178.
55. *Ibid*, p. 179.

CHAPTER VIII

1. Al-Khwānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī Rawḍātī, Iṣṭahān, 1367 A.H., p. 70.
2. Muirhead, *Chapters from Aristotle's Ethics*, p. 8.
3. Al-Fārābī, *Al-Ārā'*, p. 82; see also Harūn Khān Sherwānī, *Studies in Muslim Political thought and Administration*, Lahore, 1942, p. 84.
4. De Boer, T. J., *History of Philosophy in Islam*, London, 1903, p. 123.
5. *Tahdhīb*, pp. 97-98.
6. *Ibid*, p. 61.
7. *Ibid*, pp. 95, 108, 144.
8. *Ibid*, p. 112.
9. *Ibid*, p. 96.
10. *Ibid*, p. 98.
11. *Ibid*, p. 122.
12. Macdonald, D. B., *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, London, 1903, p. 165.
13. For al-Māwardī's conception of government see Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, pp. 27-37; and H. K. Sherwānī, *Studies in Muslim Political Thought and Administration*, pp. 107-122.
14. H.K. Sherwānī, *Studies in Muslim Political Thought*, pp. 106-107.
15. *Tahdhīb*, p. 118, 61.

CHAPTER IX

1. Ross, W. D., *Aristotle*, p. 15; Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, Vol. I, p. 40.
2. *Tahdhīb*, p. 149.
3. *Al-Ḥikmat al-Khālīdah*, ed. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Badwī, 1952, pp. 164-165, 114, 117, 129.
4. *Ibid*, p. 134.
5. *Ibid*, p. 135.
6. *Ibid*, p. 153.
7. *Ibid*, p. 193.
8. *Ibid*, p. 193.
9. *Ibid*, p. 194.
10. *Ibid*, p. 194.
11. *Ibid*, pp. 247-273.
12. *Al-Fauz*, Sw., p. 148.

13. Bashīr Aḥmad Dār, *Qur'ānic Ethics*, Lahore, 1961.
 14. *Qur'ān*, XXX, 30.
 15. *Qur'ān*, XLII, 13.
 16. This tradition has been mentioned by Baihaqī. Al-Shawkānī writes that it is *mu'ḍal*, consequently he includes it among those traditions which are considered to have been fabricated (*mawḍū'āt*). See his *Fawā'id al-Majmū'ah fī Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū'ah*, Maṭba' Moḥammadi Lahore, 1272 A.H., p. 88.
 17. Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, Vol. I, pp. 190, 252-263.
 18. *Tahdhīb*, p. 139.
 19. The influence of Abū Bakr al-Rāzī is mostly on the details of Miskawaih's practical ethics. See Dr. 'Abdul 'Azīz 'Izzat's *Miskawaih*, pp. 420-424.
 20. Gordon Leff, *Medieval Thought*, Pelican Books, 1958, pp. 37-38; Sidgwick, *Outline of the History of Ethics*, pp. 130-131.
 21. Gordon Leff, *Medieval Thought* p. 41; Curtis, S. J., *A Short History of Western Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, London, 1950, pp. 16-17.
 22. Sidgwick, *Outline of the History of Ethics*, pp. 131-32.
 23. Thilly, Frank, *History of Philosophy*, revised edition, New York, 1955, p. 186.
 24. Naṣīruddīn Ṭūsī, *Akhlōq-e-Nāṣirī*, p. 6.
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- 3 Adam Mez, *The Renaissance of Islam*, Eng. tr., Ṣalāḥuddīn Khudā Bakhsh and D. S. Margoliouth, Patna, 1937
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